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China

CHINA TOURISM

FROM MT. JIUHUA TO HUIZHOU — A CULTURAL JOURNEY

ROCK & ROLL BEIJING

BICYCLING THROUGH TIBET

267

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FOCUS ON XINJIANG

On the vast land of Xinjiang in Northwest China, there are mountains, basins, deserts and lakes, all providing tourists with numerous attractions — ruins of ancient cities and tombs along the Silk Road; Turpan, an oasis in the desert; Kanas Lake, a gem embedded in the Altay Mountains; Bayanbulak, the Swan Lake; and the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan. The minority ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, such as the Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Tajik, Xibe, Kirgiz and Tatar, all have their own unique and colourful culture.

新
Focus on
Xinjiang

FOCUS ON SHAANXI

Shaanxi is the cradle of the Chinese civilisation and Xi'an was the capital of 13 dynasties. This has left Shaanxi a rich legacy of historical sites and cultural relics. In the provincial capital Xi'an, there is the fascinating terracotta army unearthed from the tomb of the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang; the tomb of Tang-dynasty Wu Zetian, China's first empress; and the stele forest. The province's beauty is capped with the sheer cliffs of Mount Huashan and the yellow earth of the Loess Plateau.

陝
Focus on
Shaanxi

FOCUS ON YUNNAN

The mountainous wonderland of Yunnan enjoys a favourable warm climate all year round. Its capital, Kunming, sitting alongside Yunnan's largest lake, Dianchi, has the honourable name of "Spring City". The province is full of natural wonders and cultural relics, such as the Stone Forests, the Shangri-la, and the ancient cities of Dali and Lijiang. With over 20 diverse ethnic groups making up about one-third of the population, opportunities abound for you to see their characteristic cultures and customs.

滇
Focus on
Yunnan

The Call of China's West

FOCUS ON TIBET

The Tibet Autonomous Region of China is a land of mystery for tourists, a land of wonders for explorers, a land of purity for Buddhists, and the ultimate challenge for mountaineers. Its beautiful landscapes, unique geographical features and rich cultural legacy continue to attract an increasing number of visitors.

The countless attractions of Tibet make it impossible to include them all in one book. This photographic publication offers an introduction to some of the Region's most celebrated features: the Potala Palace and its precious collection of cultural relics; the Jokhang Temple with strings of worshippers prostrating themselves before it; the Shoton Festival and the Sunning of Buddha ceremony; the ruins of the mystical Guge Kingdom; and the amazing Qiangtang Grassland....

At the same time, *Focus on Tibet* outlines the six major routes to Tibet and the many stunning landscapes found along the way.

Paperback Only

藏
Focus on Tibet
西藏遊

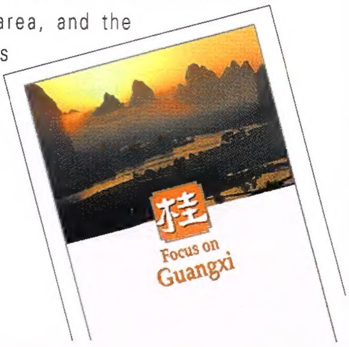
FOCUS ON GUIZHOU

Guizhou is a land of splendid natural scenery. Its towering mountains and karst landforms team up with the gurgling rivers and magnificent waterfalls to form a wonderful work of Mother Nature. Huanguoshu Waterfalls and the limestone caves are the province's most frequented scenic spots. The 17 ethnic groups living in the picturesque province further colour the land with vivid customs and joyous festivals. It is its natural beauty and culture that make Guizhou a perfect travel destination.

黔
Focus on
Guizhou

FOCUS ON GUANGXI

Unusual topography has endowed the province with numerous spectacular karst formations — limestone caves, pinnacles and rocks. The most famous and enchanting scenic spot is Guilin, and the most travelled route, on the Lijiang River from Guilin to Yangshuo. The coastal city of Beihai has the country's largest beach, the Silver Beach. Other attractions include the diverse traditional customs of ethnic minorities, the Sino-Vietnamese border area, and the mysterious Huashan cliff paintings.



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MAIL BOX

On this page we include letters and comments from our readers. We welcome and value all suggestions, criticism and questions from our readers anytime. Please post, fax or E-mail your letters and comments to us (details at the bottom of the page).

LETTERS

Entrance to Tibet

Dear Editor,

I'm your long time reader. I'm at Chengdu now. I knew from your magazine that it is not required to apply entry permit to Tibet after mid-May. I want to know if it is true. I couldn't buy any air ticket in an airline counter in Chengdu and the staff said they hadn't got any notice for permit selling Lhasa ticket to Hong Kong people. Now I plan to go to Lhasa by vehicle and run the north route from Chengdu via Qamdo to Lhasa. Please give me more information about the Tibet entry permit so that I can start my new journey.

Thanks!

Ko Siu Yin, H. K.
July 20, 2002.

Editor's Note:

It is true that compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao do not need the permit for travelling in Tibet after June, 2002. However, from the experiences of many of our readers and correspondents, the implementation of the new regulation involved many relevant government organs, it may not have been passed to every department concerned.

For travellers who face similar problems, you may either go to a big airline counter to check with the director, or enquire the Tibet Tourism Bureau: (891) 683 5472.

Opinion of an Article

Dear China Tourism,

Regarding the "Beggar Art" article in Experiences (July issue, No. 264, page 81), just a short word of clarification regarding beggars. The fact is that the "beggars" who you mention in the article actually are artists or performers. If you try to give them money they will perform a little act. These performers are not poverty-stricken and many travel around Europe to perform on streets for money.... I'm certain that many readers find the "Beggar Art" article wrong and misleading. Otherwise thanks for an interesting magazine, which I will continue to buy.

Anders Baadsgaard Pedersen
Freelance tour leader from Denmark

Editor's Note:

We really appreciate your rectification in the article of "Beggar Art". We will pay more attention in selecting and editing articles in our future work, and hope you will continue to enjoy the reading and give us your comment and suggestion on our magazine.

Soliciting Partner to Run Eco-village

We have received a letter from an enthusiastic reader who is soliciting for an expert or partner to run an "eco-village" in Guangdong. His letter is abstracted as follows:

"There are still some forests with brooks and even waterfalls which are completely immune to pollution in Guangdong Province. The annual rent for one hectare is about US$ 6. Since we can sign contract to use a large patch of land for 50 years, we shall not only save the forests but also build eco-village for our enjoyment. Luckily, we have found one which is 40 minutes' drive from the new airport of Guangzhou that is now still under construction. We plan to run an eco-village which can entertain people from all over the world who are eager to learn an oriental regimen by staying with us for 10 days or one month.

Our party consists of four persons: a writer, a Taiwanese manufacturer, and two overseas Chinese ladies ready to return to China from Hawaii after retirement. Since none of us have any experience in running eco-village, we are looking for an expert to be our consultant or our partner."

Interested parties can contact ***Mr. Chi On Kwan*** *through e-mail:* ***chionk@hutchcity.com****, or fax to: (852) 2339 2267.*

Please send your letters to:
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Photos & article by Xie Guanghui

Mount Jiuhua located in Southeast China's Anhui Province is an important Buddhist mecca among pilgrims, where famous Buddhist legends, mortal bodies of noted monks and nuns, as well as time-honoured historical and cultural heritages are found. Hence, the mountain is regarded as one of China's Four Famous Buddhist Mountains. Nowadays, the gracious of well-protected temples and convenient cableway there even attract flocks of tourists.

Another side in Huizhou Prefecture of southern Anhui is a rendezvous of unique ancient residences which are more or less far-famed in the world. The Hongcun and Xidi villages have been inscribed in the World Heritage Site lists. After all, tourists will find them be soaked in a strong taste of Chinese culture in these areas.

Excursions

40 Back to Hailing Island

Photos by Zheng Zhenqiang Article by Huanian

Looking back 20 years ago, the writer was so intoxicated by the carefree life in the Hailing Island, a rather unknown place in Guangdong at that time. After every trip there, he returned home with a case full of pictures and a mind filled with fantastic dreams. Yet, time has changed. He feels depressed to see today's Hailing Island have lost its former wildness, tranquility and naturalness. However, the whole-hearted laughter of tourists and the surging waves finally release his heart.

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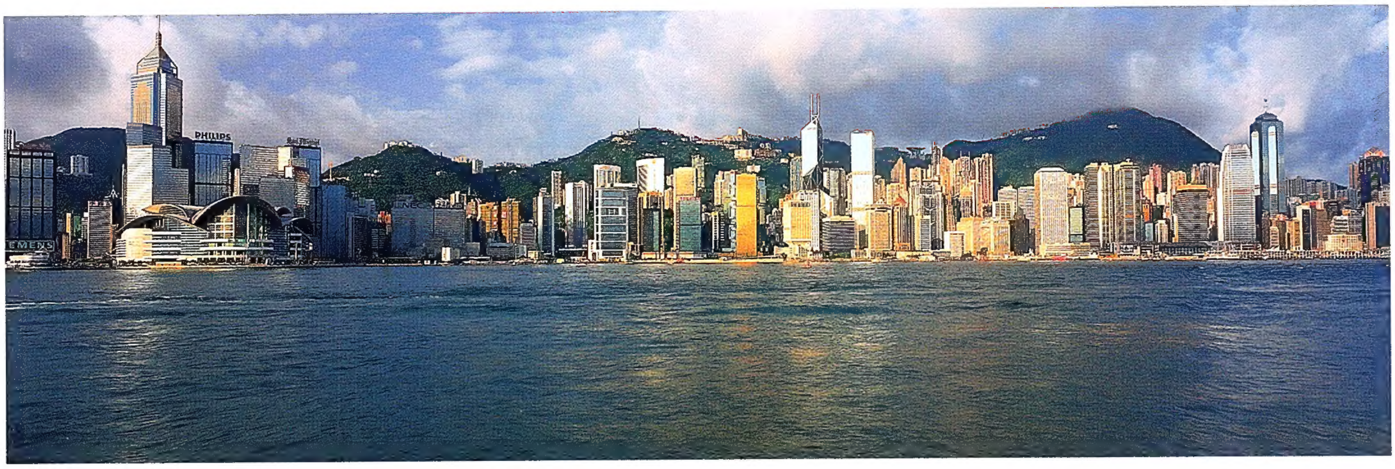

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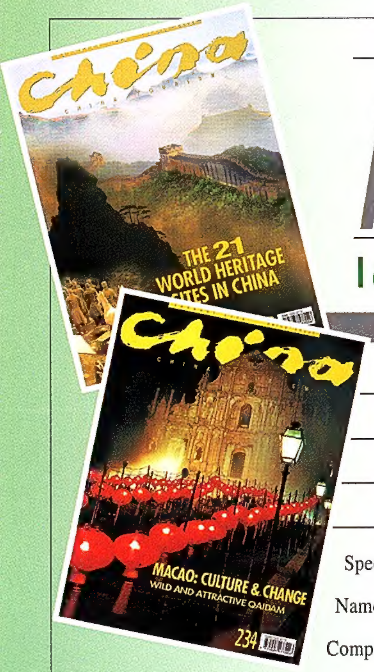
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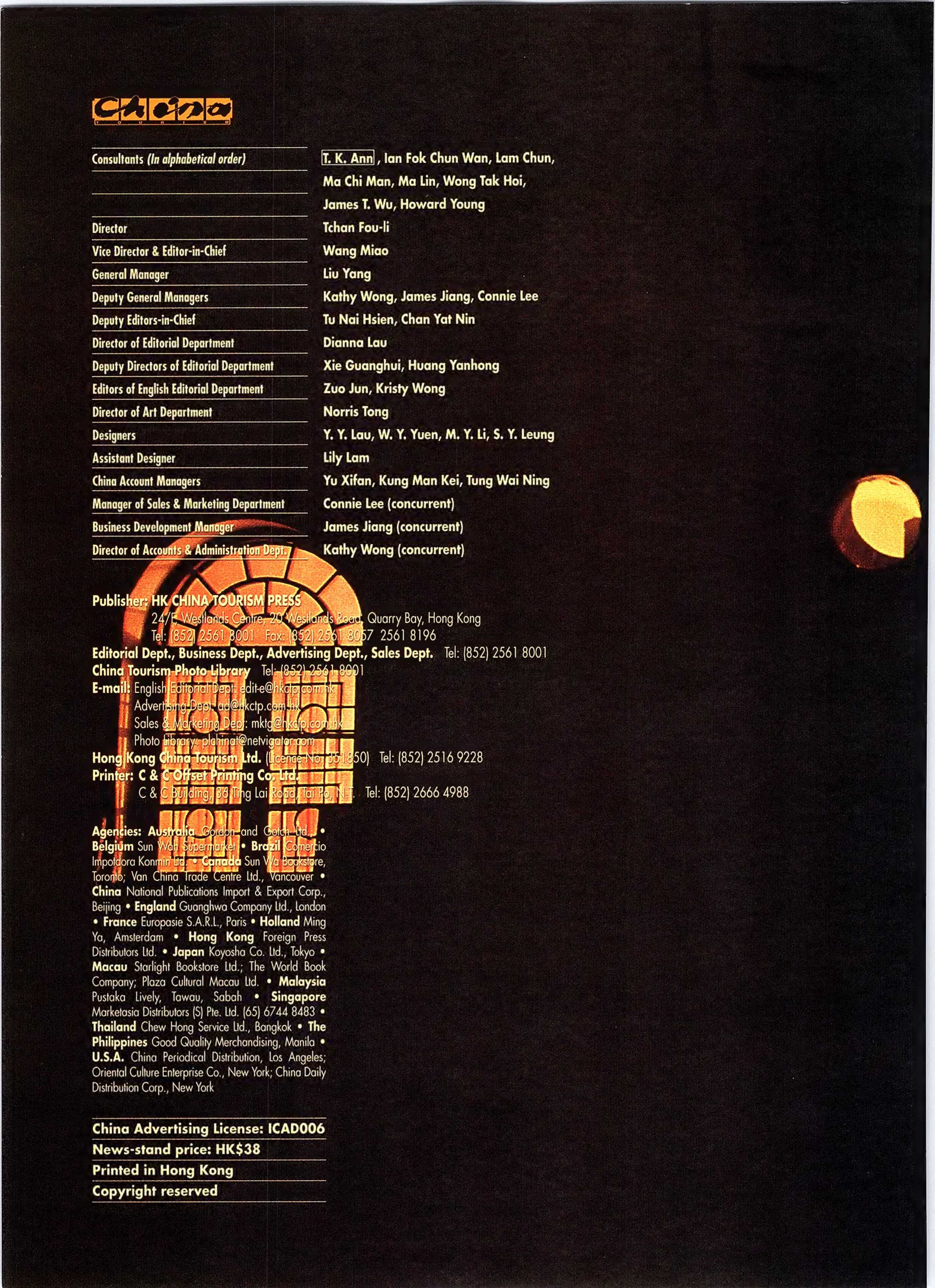

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FROM THE EDITOR

OLD FAITHS, NEW DILEMAS

Recent years have seen a rekindling of interest in ancient faiths and an explosive growth in tourism. At first glance the two might have little in common yet their futures are inextricably linked, particularly at China's sacred mountains, one of which, Jiuhua, is the focal point of this month's main feature.

If one regards religious edifices, temples and other places of worship or meditation, as integral to a nation's culture then it is not difficult to subscribe to the theory that religion, like culture, flourishes best when the economy is strong. And as one of the easiest ways to kick start an economy in the 21st century is to promote tourism then it would appear, on the surface at least, that tourism can be mutually beneficial both to local economies and to temples and other sacred sites.

But remember the cautionary tale of the goose that laid golden eggs. In the rush to reap yuan, dollars, euros and yen, the very values that made these mountains so special in the first place may be trampled underfoot.

Man has always been drawn to mountains. And their attraction as tourist destinations has been considerably increased by the ancient temples, monasteries and nunneries built there. But increasingly they are under pressure and what chance can there be for peaceful meditation when the hills are overrun by tourist hordes and the sacred groves awash with litter? And will the pilgrims seeking spiritual truth and enlightenment be ignored or even displaced by moneyed day trippers out for a good time?

The debate will be an ongoing one and there are probably few definitive answers to the questions posed. Every proposal to put yet another cable car up another sacred mountain will generate opposition. Our writer, who was irritated by rampant commercialism at the foot of Mount Jiuhua, was encouraged to learn local government departments are starting to check uncontrolled development there.

In the mean time it behoves all of us to tread lightly on this world of ours so that the magic of Jiuhua, and all other inspirational places, will continue to inspire future generations.

Happy Travelling.

Photo by Xie Guanghui

Beijing to Repair Qing Dynasty Theatre

The first phase of the renovation of the Yangping Theatre, Beijing's largest Qing Dynasty cultural authority, is expected to start in this September, with focus on the interior of the theatre. The affiliated facilities would be repaired and the theatre's exterior restored in the second phase. The whole renovation project will take two or three years at the cost of more than 10 million yuan (US$1.2 million). When completed, the building will return to its former function as a theatre.

The theatre, first built in 1805 by businessmen from more than 20 counties in Shanxi Province, is now used as a storehouse for a pharmacy. Comprising a stage and three courtyard houses in a row, the theatre was noted for its grandeur.

"Bring Art Home" Program to be Launched in Hong Kong

In this November, exhibitions and various artistic activities will be held in Hong Kong to bring local arts to various districts and disseminate the message of "Bring Art Home" to members of the public.

Sponsored by the Art Promotion Office (APO) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of Hong Kong and the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Corporation, the Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme have entered the second year. The scheme is expected to add a bit of art flavour and colour to the hustle and bustle of city life.

The scheme has expanded from four to 13 artists and art groups this year, including the budding and senior artists of 1960s. The selected artists will also participate in various education and extension activities to share their ideas and experience of art creation with members of the public.

(Old Town Square in Warsaw, Poland. Photo: Jacek Piwowarczyk)

Visa Free in Travelling Poland

The Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) have recently reached an agreement that holders of HKSAR passports shall be allowed to enter, leave, transit and stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland without visa for up to three months from the date of entry. The rule will be effective since September 28, 2002, and is seen a way to boost tourism between both territories and allow easier access to Poland for Hong Kong people. Meanwhile, BNO passport holders can also enter Poland without visa for up to two weeks.

One of the most interesting countries in Europe, Poland reveals a rich cultural heritage and unspoiled natural beauty. Besides owning hospitable residents, the country is also free from both BSE (mad cow disease) and foot-and-mouth disease. Famous scenic spots of Poland include the Baltic beaches, Mazuria Lake District, virgin marshes on the Biebrza River, Bialowieski National Park, as well as historic cities like Cracow, Wroclaw and Gdansk. Those who prefer simple forms of relaxation can try an ecological farm, staying with a host family far from the noise and stress of the big cities.

The 16th Philatelic Exhibition to be Held in Sichuan

The 16th Asia International Philatelic Exhibition is confirmed to be held in Mianyang, a booming electronic as well as industrial city in mid-Sichuan Province, in September 2003. China is the second time to held the event, while the hobby of collecting stamp has grown increasingly popular in the country in recent years.

According to the federation sources, the federation was founded in January 1982 and has 3.5 million members and encompasses 41,000 local stamp-collection associations.

Xilutian Strip Coal Mine to Become Forest Park

The Xilutian strip coal mine in Fushun in Northeast China's Liaoning Province, the biggest of its kind in Asia, will be closed in 2007 after 93 years' service, and a forestry park will be constructed on its site.

The strip coal mine has produced 260 million tons of coal in the past 88 years. About 1.6 billion cubic metres of rock has been dug out and piled in three slag heaps nearby. One of these will be turned into the park and the other two will be covered with plants by 2015. The program has cost two million yuan (US$ 240,963) and 667 hectares of trees have been planted.

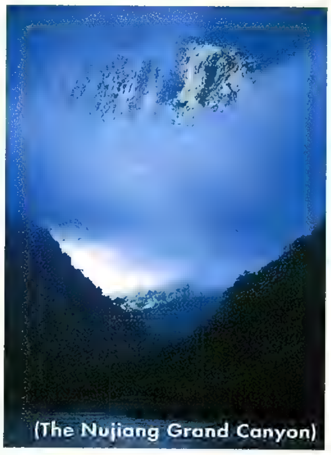
According to statistics from the State Forestry Administration, China has the most forestry parks in the world. They number more than 1,100 and cover a total area of 11.27 million hectares.

Keyuan in Dongguang to be Renovated

Dongguan's Keyuan Garden, known as one of the "Four Famous Gardens of Guangdong", will be invested with 100-plus million yuan (US$12 million) this year to renovate and expand. More than 200 families who live near the garden will have to move as the garden will cover more than 2.7 hectares when the expansion is completed.

Attracting up to 100,000 tourists annually, Keyuan Garden was built in 1850 by incorporating concepts of the *Art of War*, a military strategy book authored by Sun Wu during the Spring and War Period (770 — 476 B.C.). The other three famous gardens are Liangyuan Garden in Foshan, Qinghui Garden in Shunde and Yuying Garden in Panyu.

China's Largest State Park in the Run for World Heritage Title


(The Nujiang Grand Canyon)

Early this year, the China National Commission for the UNESCO has submitted necessary documents to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for applying the Three Parallel Rivers National Park in Southwest China's Yunnan Province as a World Heritage Site. And UN experts have planned to visit Yunnan for a spot survey. In these years, the central and local governments have invested billions of yuan to plant trees and build water conservation projects to prevent the region from environmental deterioration.

Believed to be the largest state park in China, the Three Parallel Rivers National Park comprises nine nature reserves and 10 scenic spots in northwestern Yunnan, where the Nujiang, Lancang and Jinsha rivers run parallel to each other from north to south, covering a total area of 3.4 million hectares. The region features mountain ranges, rivers, glaciers and karst caves. It is home to 77 animals and 34 rare plants under state protection.

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Visiting Luxurious Residential Mansions of Qing Dynasty

Shanxi During the Qing Dynasty (1644 — 1911), some well-to-do merchants in Jinzhong (Central Shanxi Province), who were also well-educated, liked to build mansions which revealed their aesthetic knowledge. These buildings were all along regarded as art pieces. This day, some of these grandest mansions are still well preserved, creating a special scenic line to appreciate the "Shanxi Merchants Culture" in this area.

Called "a bright pearl of residential architecture in Northwest China", the Qiao Family Mansion located 50 km from Taiyuan City is one of these examples. Having been famous since the film "Raise the Red Lantern" (directed by Zhang Yimou) was shoot here, it was the former residence of Qiao Zhiyong, a celebrated merchant in Shanxi. The mansion covers an area of 8,000-plus square metres including six courts. The courts altogether form a shape resembling a Chinese character, 囍 (pronounced as "xi"), which means "the happiness of wedding".

There are three other well-known mansions which are worthy to pay a visit, including the Cao and Qu family mansions in Qixian County, and Wang Family Mansion in Lingshi County.

To the Qiao Family Mansion: Take a scheduled bus to Qixian County at the Jiannan Terminus in Taiyuan, and get off at Qiaojiabao Village station.

Ruins of the Shang Dynasty, Zhengzhou

Henan Archaeologists have discovered what is believed to have been the largest palace of the ancient Shang Dynasty (c. 16th century — c. 11th century B.C.) at Anyang in Central China's Henan Province.

The ruins were found near the site of the Yin ruins. The rectangular building is 173 metres long and 90 metres wide and is the biggest building found to date back to before the Qin Dynasty (221 — 206 B.C.). The main hall's corridors and doorways indicate the building once housed royalty. The burnt floors and walls and charcoal remains reveal that it was destroyed in a fierce fire.

Martial Arts Tournament on Mount Leshan

Sichuan The Mount Leshan International Tourism Buddha Festival has been held from the September 1 to 3. During the event, the Mount Emei International Martial Arts Tournament was also held which has invited representative martial arts masters from nearly 20 countries to gather in Mount Emei.

Organised by the China Martial Arts Corporation, Leshan City People's Governments, and co-organised by the Sichuan Martial Arts Corporation, Emeishan City People's Government, and Mount Emei Management Committee. The contents of the tournament included around 30 items set by the International Martial Arts Co-organisation, such as "Long Fists", "Tai-chi Fists", "Southern Fists", skills of playing knives, swords, long swords, and rods, as well as warrior skills of the Emei School. Shaolin warriors, Wudang or Emei school martial arts were also presented.

Natural Walks in Eastern Taiwan

Taiwan The Hualien-Taitung area can be termed the backyard of Taiwan, with the Taroko and Yushan National Park, the East Coast and East Rift Valley national scenic areas, and three forest recreation areas (Chinan, Fuyuan, and Zhiben). With such an abundance of tourist resources, this is the ideal choice for your vacation. You can immerse in the excitement of rafting, the fascination of whale, and dolphin-watching, the healthful exercise of walking forest trails, the relaxation of soaking in soothing hot mineral baths, or the intellectual stimulation of culture tours.

The Taroko National Park is well known for its awesome marble-walled gorge as well as its majestic mountain scenery, Eternal Spring Shrine, Swallows' Grottos, Tunnel of Nine Turns, and other incomparable sights. The park's spectacular geologic features also encompass such spectacles as the Baiyang Waterfall just above the gorge, and the precipitous Quingshui Cliffs just below it.

The East Coast National Scenic Area is rich in varied topography, such as stepped seaside platforms, sand and pebble beaches, coral shores, offshore islands, capes, and sea-eroded platforms, channels, and caves. The coast is also the main home of the Amis tribes people. Tourists can experience the aboriginal culture of this hospitable indigenous tribes in Taiwan.

Refurbished Deng Highway Opened

Shandong Upon the completion of an improvement project lasting for 14 months, the Deng Highway located on the Liugong (Lord Liu) Island in Weihai, a city in Northeast China's Shandong Province, is recently upgraded to a State Second Class Highway. It acts as a transportation means for tourism on the island with high efficiency. New erections including a navy training ground, tailor garden, and view-watching stage have also been established along the highway. Among these, sculptures of the North Pacific Navy also showcase the public the life of the navy at that time.

Stretching from Majingzi in the west and a farmland in the east on Liugong Island, the highway is 1,250 metres in length. Having raised an amount of capital of more than 13 million yuan in 2001, the Management Committee of Liugong Island conducted various refurbishments for the Tang Highway.

In the past, the Deng Highway was tortuous and difficult to drive. There were sand and dust during sunny days and it became muddy during rainy days. Wild grasses and ruins of buildings scattered on both sides of the highway, destroying the overall attractive view. Based on a theme of "nature, character, and culture", the refurbished Deng Highway has been built with 1,600-plus shrubs, over 10,000 bamboo trees of five species, 130,000-more flower trees of over 20 species, creating scenes which resemble the gardens in southern China.

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THE PEA

Flea Market Opens at Peak Tower Again

Hong Kong Following the success of the flea market held in this summer, the Peak Tower located at the Peak, a famous scenic spot in Hong Kong, has planned to open another flea market in this autumn, which the admission is free.

Booths of the flea market feature on creative art activities, handicrafts selling, traditional Chinese ornaments and handicrafts, as well as special delicacies. Visitors can also make tours around nearby scenic spots such as the Peak Galleria and Victoria Peak Gardens.

Opening period: September 15-November 24, 2002.
Opening time: 11:00~19:00 on Sundays and public holidays

Science Park Opened in Nanjing

Zhejiang The Science Park of Nanjing University and Colleges in Gulou District was inaugurated on August 16 in Nanjing, capital of East China's Jiangsu Province.

Sponsored by the Gulou district government and Nanjing University, the science park is open to colleges, scientific research institutes, financial institutions and large or medium-sized enterprises.

Designed as a State-level science park, it is aimed at promoting the application of advanced technology developed by colleges and universities around Nanjing as well as from the rest of the country.

Air China's Non-stop Virgin Flight from Beijing to New York Scheduled

Aviation It has been officially confirmed that Air China will fly her virgin non-stop service from Beijing to New York on September 27, 2002. There will be three flights every week, and the initial round trip promotion ticket price is set at about US$600. A Boeing 747-400 jet plane, with its air route flying over the North Pole, successfully completed its test flight from Beijing to New York on August 19. That will be the first ever non-stop flight connecting the two big cities. Many government officials, businessmen as well as tourists are expected to choose this new non-stop Air China flight in future.

(New York City)

Precious Wild Bird Well Protected, Xi'an

Shaanxi The number of red ibises, a kind of rare bird found only in Northwest China's Shaanxi Province, has reached over 400, 57 times more than the number of the birds in the 1980s after hard work on the protection of these rare birds. The sever such rare birds were first found in Yangxian County in southern Shaanxi in 1982. Great efforts have been made to protect the bird and breed them artificially. The government also established a natural protection zone in Yangxian County, which led to improved conditions for the birds and the increase in population.

Night Cruise on Pearl River, Guangzhou

Guangdong Having adopted the opening reform policy for a few years, the outlook of Guangzhou, capital city of South China's Guangdong Province, has completely been improved. Lots of trees are particularly planted on the river banks of the Pearl River, while the promenade is expanded to become a tourists walking zone.

With enchanting street lamps and soft music as background, becomes more brilliant and romantic at nighttime. Especially the part between the Aiqun Building and Southern Building, where people can stroll along the promenade to appreciate exotic buildings of European tastes. In viewing the best night scene in Guangzhou, one must join a day-and-night cruise on the Pearl River organized at the Xiti Pier. Costs of the cruise (per person): 18 yuan (weekdays); 20 yuan (weekends & public holidays); 70 yuan with an addition of a buffet.

Add: Xiti Pier, Yuanjiang Road West

Tel: (20) 8188 8932/ 8190 8190

(Photo & information by Liang Juqiao)

Appreciating Enchanting Polar Lights in Mohe

Heilongjiang Known as an "emerald on the golden cockscomb" and is located on the northern foot of the Greater Hinggan Ridge, Mohe is the northern-most county of North China's Heilongjiang Province. Mohe, a city of the same name, is the only and best site to observe the polar lights in China. There are four towns and one township under the jurisdiction of the county which covers 18,233 sq km, forming a population of more than 100,000.

The fastest way to Mohe is to take a train from Jiagedaqi in Inner Mongolia. The distance of the railway is 475 and a single trip takes around 12.5 hours. There are scheduled buses going to and fro Mohe and the North Pole Village every day. The polar light appears all around the year, however, the nighttime between the nine days before and after the Summer Solstice (10th solar term) are easiest to see the polar lights, since there will be less blocks by clouds in that period.

Travellers can consider a cross-border tour to nearby Russian cities after leaving Mohe. Owning a national boundary of 245 km, Mohe is close to the Chita and Yamuer prefectures of Russia. However, tourists are suggested to have their travel visas approved before setting for the Russia.

Qilou Architecture Protected in Guangzhou

Guangdong The capital seat of Guangdong Province has drawn up plans to protect its *qilou* houses-multi-storey buildings that integrate Chinese and European architectural styles. *Qilou* houses are popular in Fujian Province as well as Guangdong and were built by Chinese businessmen who had returned from Southeast Asia in the early 20th century.

According to local experts, the buildings are based on traditional houses in South China, with features added Western architectural styles such as baroque and Gothic.

The first floor of a *qilou* house is used as a shop. Part of the second floor hangs over the first floor and is supported by columns, forming a shelter in front of the shop. People live on the upper floors.

The houses line up to form a shopping street, leaving overhangs on both sides of the street to shelter pedestrians.

Love for Yangshuo

Writer: Zhou Mimi (周蜜蜜)

Novelist, essayist, award-winning writer for young people, editor for TV, broadcasting, newspapers and publishing.

People have felt a warm affection for Yangshuo since ancient days.

I paid a visit to Yangshuo last summer. After visiting the Bilian (Blue Lotus) Peak, I went to a house in Qianjie Street in the Town of Yangshuo formerly lived in by the late Xu Beihong, the great modern Chinese artist. He called himself the "Heavenly Man of Yangshuo", indicating his deep love for Yangshuo.

Xu came to Yangshuo in 1936. Since he loved the Yangshuo scenery, he settled down there. At first he rented a house. Later, Li Zongren, a Guangxi warlord who was very fond of his paintings, bought the house and gave it to the artist as a gift. Xu lived in this house for over two years and created a large number of artistic works in praise of the landscapes around Yangshuo and along the Lijiang River.

Xijie Street in Yangshuo, where Xu once also lived, is one of the best known tourist attractions in Yangshuo. All tourists coming to Yangshuo visit this street.

Xijie Street was built in 1674. It runs between the Lijiang River and the Blue Lotus Peak. The street is paved with flagstones, which look ancient and elegant. It was here that Western culture and Eastern culture first met and merged in Yangshuo.

As early as in 1917, Christianity was introduced into Yangshuo. Missionaries accompanied by accordions sang in front of the Jiangxi Guild Hall in Xijie Street. Residents living in this street at that time were the first to be exposed to Western culture.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Xijie Street became a world-famous attraction and tourists flocked here. Presidents Nixon, Carter, Bush and Clinton from the United States have all sauntered along this street. President Carter and his wife even rode bikes here.

Xijie Street, which has been in existence for centuries, is nowadays filled with an exotic atmosphere. It is chock-a-block with curio shops, art galleries, teahouses, bars, and English-practising corners. Statistics show that every day more than a thousand foreigners visit the street.

Watching the streams of tourists, I could not help thinking of a line from a song: "Mountains and rivers are all filled with feelings." All people, regardless of differences in language or nationality, love Yangshuo's landscapes. This is a street where East and West meet. It is a Chinese paradise created by people from all parts of the world.

I strolled to the historic Jiangxi Guild Hall. It has been converted into a hotel with a restaurant serving Chinese and Western food. The investors were two French brothers, whose Chinese names are Wen Shuangqing and Wen Shuangfu. Cheerfully they offered us delicious food and wine, and told us how they had come to settle in this street:

The younger brother, Wen Shuangfu, had enlisted and served in Africa. A few years later, he returned to France and became a policeman. After that, he began traveling all over the world. In 1991, he came to China for the first time and visited Yangshuo. He was struck by the beauty of the place and immediately decided to settle down here.

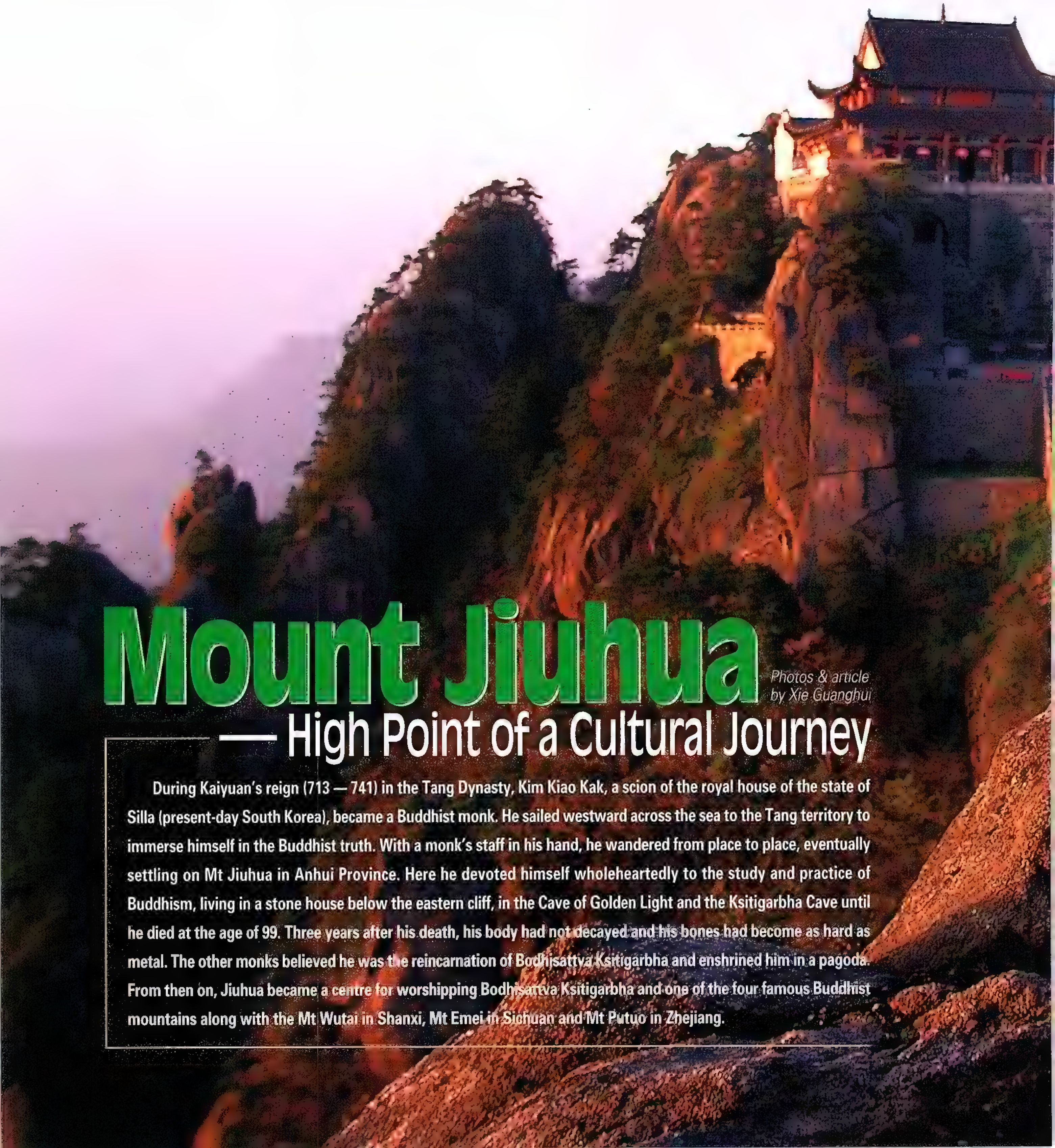
"I am spell-bound," he said. "For 10 years, I have not been back to France. I've found my career and my wife here. Then I called my elder brother to come here to join me. Now he has settled down here too. Our parents came to see us, they like this place very much. I believe that as the Southwest is to be further developed, Yangshuo will have a bright future."

Wen Shuangfu spoke to us in standard Mandarin, his eyes shining with delight. Obviously, he truly loved Yangshuo.

Saying goodbye to the French brothers, we headed for the Yueliang (Moon) Hill to the south of Yangshuo. The scenery of this mountain is unique. It has a hole in it through which one can see hills of different shades behind Liangshan. Looking at it from a distance, it resembles the moon perching in a fold of the mountain. From different angles, one sometimes sees a waning moon, sometimes a waxing moon. No wonder it is also known as Moon Hill.

An elderly countrywoman lives at the foot of this hill. People call her the Moon Mama. She used to be illiterate. But helped by foreign friends, she was able to learn several foreign languages, and she was invited to work as a guide for foreign tourists.

The Moon Mama invited us to tea at her home. In fact, her household has become a place for tourists to take a break. Quite often she refuses to take any money. The generosity and hospitality of the Moon Mama has become known far and wide.



Mount Jiuhua

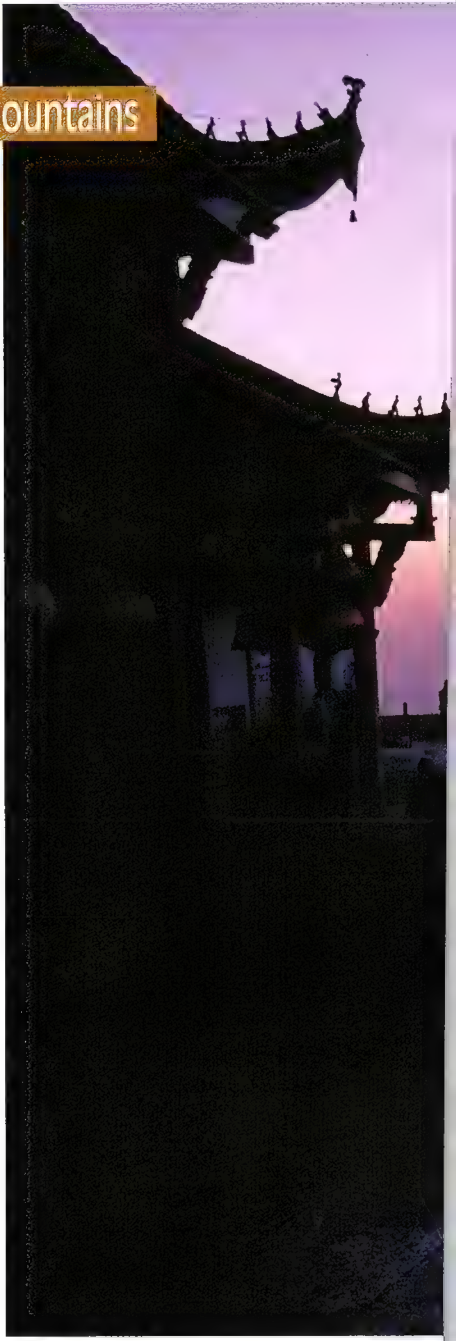
— High Point of a Cultural Journey

Photos & article
by Xie Guanghui

During Kaiyuan's reign (713 — 741) in the Tang Dynasty, Kim Kiao Kak, a scion of the royal house of the state of Silla (present-day South Korea), became a Buddhist monk. He sailed westward across the sea to the Tang territory to immerse himself in the Buddhist truth. With a monk's staff in his hand, he wandered from place to place, eventually settling on Mt Jiuhua in Anhui Province. Here he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the study and practice of Buddhism, living in a stone house below the eastern cliff, in the Cave of Golden Light and the Ksitigarbha Cave until he died at the age of 99. Three years after his death, his body had not decayed and his bones had become as hard as metal. The other monks believed he was the reincarnation of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha and enshrined him in a pagoda. From then on, Jiuhua became a centre for worshipping Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha and one of the four famous Buddhist mountains along with the Mt Wutai in Shanxi, Mt Emei in Sichuan and Mt Putuo in Zhejiang.

Mount Jiuhua

— One of China's Four Famous Buddhist Mountains



Zhiyuan — One of the Seven Great Monasteries on Jiuhua

Jiuhuajie (Jiuhua Street), running from Yingxianqiao (Fairy Greeting Bridge) in the north to Roushendian (the Mortal Body Hall) in the south, is the centre of Mt Jiuhua, covering four square kilometres. From a high point, one can get a panoramic view of row upon row of shops, houses, temples and other structures in the street. Most buildings are in the Anhui architectural style with horse-head-shaped side walls, small outside windows, whitewashed walls and dark grey roof tiles. Small paths paved with green stone lead from one alley to another with temples or nunneries on either side. It is a world where monks and nuns mix harmoniously with lay people.

The centre of Jiuhuajie is a square paved with granite. On the north side of the square is a pond for freeing captive fish, from where a flight of steps leads to Huacheng Temple. The Buddhist statues in the temple were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution in 1968. The existing buildings have been converted into the Historical and Cultural Museum of Mt Jiuhua. Preserved in the Spiritual Hall, Deva Hall, Hall of Sakyamuni and the Depository of Buddhist Scripture — all of them Anhui-style structures with whitewashed walls and dark grey roof tiles — are the *Tripitak* printed from wood-blocks carved during Wanli's reign (1573 — 1619) in the Ming Dynasty; the *Blood Sutra* written in the hand of Haiyu, a high monk of the Ming Dynasty (1368 —1644); an Indian sutra written on Pattra leaves; an imperial decree proclaimed by Ming Emperor Shenzong; and inscriptions by Qing emperors Kangxi and Qianlong.

Another flight of 99 stone steps leads to the Mortal Body Hall. Inside the hall an octagonal wooden pagoda of seven storeys stands on a marble foundation carved with finely executed reliefs of vases, swords, writing brushes, lotus, peony, orchid, and pomegranate. In niches on each storey are eight images of Ksitigarbha. The mortal body of Ksitigarbha is preserved in a three-storeyed stone pagoda inside the wooden pagoda.

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Zhiyuan is the largest of the monasteries on Mt Jiuhua. At the main gate, I was greeted by the Truth Protector, an awe-inspiring image holding high a steel club. The Truth Protector was originally a Chinese Taoist god whose duty was guarding the gate of a temple. After Buddhism was introduced to China from India, it gradually mingled with some Chinese cultural elements. Entering the front gate, I was met in the Deva Hall by a statue of the eternally smiling Maitreya Buddha. Following a few more stone steps and turning north, I arrived at the Hall of Sakyamuni. Unlike the buildings in an ordinary monastery, the Hall of Sakyamuni in Zhiyuan faces east towards Huacheng Monastery instead of south. Zhiyuan was originally the eastern part of Huacheng Monastery. During Jiaqing's reign (1796 — 1820) in the Qing Dynasty (1644 — 1911), Longshan, a monk who had been living in seclusion in the Tiger's Cave was elected by other monks to serve as the abbot of Zhiyuan Monastery. The halls and buildings in the monastery were renovated and it began to prosper with an increasing number of believers coming to pray and burn incense. As a result, Zhiyuan Monastery became the first of the seven large Buddhist temples on Jiuhua Mountain.

Soul-saving Prayer Service

Enshrined in the Hall of Sakyamuni are the Buddhas of the Three Periods (past, present and future). Sandalwood incense smouldered in

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the burners and a great number of streamers hung down from the beams. The streamers are made of heavy brocade and inscribed with such words as "Namas Amitabha" and "Soul-Saving Ksitigardha Bodhisattva". The ends of the streamers are embroidered with lotus flowers. Nine monks wearing five-cornered monks' hats and each holding a prayer instrument were sitting in a row in front of the altar table. They were conducting a funeral prayer for a number of lay Buddhists from Hong Kong. Sitting at the door of the hall was a monk, Shenghui, a graduate from the Faculty of Architecture at Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT). He was initiated into the monkhood and became a disciple of Abbot Rende two years ago. "My teacher passed away last August while I was being initiated into the monkhood on Mt Emei," said Shenghui. "A large-scale prayer service for saving the souls of all those who died in water and on land was held. The abbots from all the principal temples came to Mt Jiuhua to attend the ceremony."

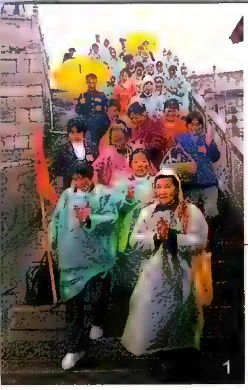
"How long did the prayer service last?"

"Seven days and seven nights."

"What is the cost of a prayer service for an ordinary person?"

"A hundred and fifty thousand yuan. It could reach 180,000 or

Previous page: A monk sitting in meditation on top of Shiwangfeng (Ten Emperors Peak)
1. Monks carry drinking water from spring
2. Burn the first incense before sunrise
3. Monks are engrossed in study Buddhist sutra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190,000 when 'ties-forming money' is included," Shenghui said. "It is cheaper to hold a funeral prayer. It costs only 400 yuan."

On the opposite side of the Hall of Sakyamuni are the Prayer Hall and the monks' quarters. On the north side are the monks' dining room, storage rooms and guestrooms. There are seven large cauldrons in the kitchen. The largest is as high as a table and big enough for a man to lie down in it. It is known as the "Thousand Monks Cauldron" because it can cook more than 200 kg of rice in one time, enough for 1,000 monks. The newly built Depository of Buddhist Scripture houses a jade reclining Buddha as well as a new edition of the *Tripitak* and prayer instruments. The Upper Guest Hall is a hostel for Qiyuan Monastery. In the corridor a scroll of calligraphy is inscribed with the words: "See through it, put it down and you will be free."

As a whole, Qiyuan Monastery has combined Anhui residential architecture with the palace style of building. Structures of different heights are ingeniously arranged according to the local terrain. The winding and zigzagging structures are interspersed with pine woods and gurgling streams, making an enchanting impression.

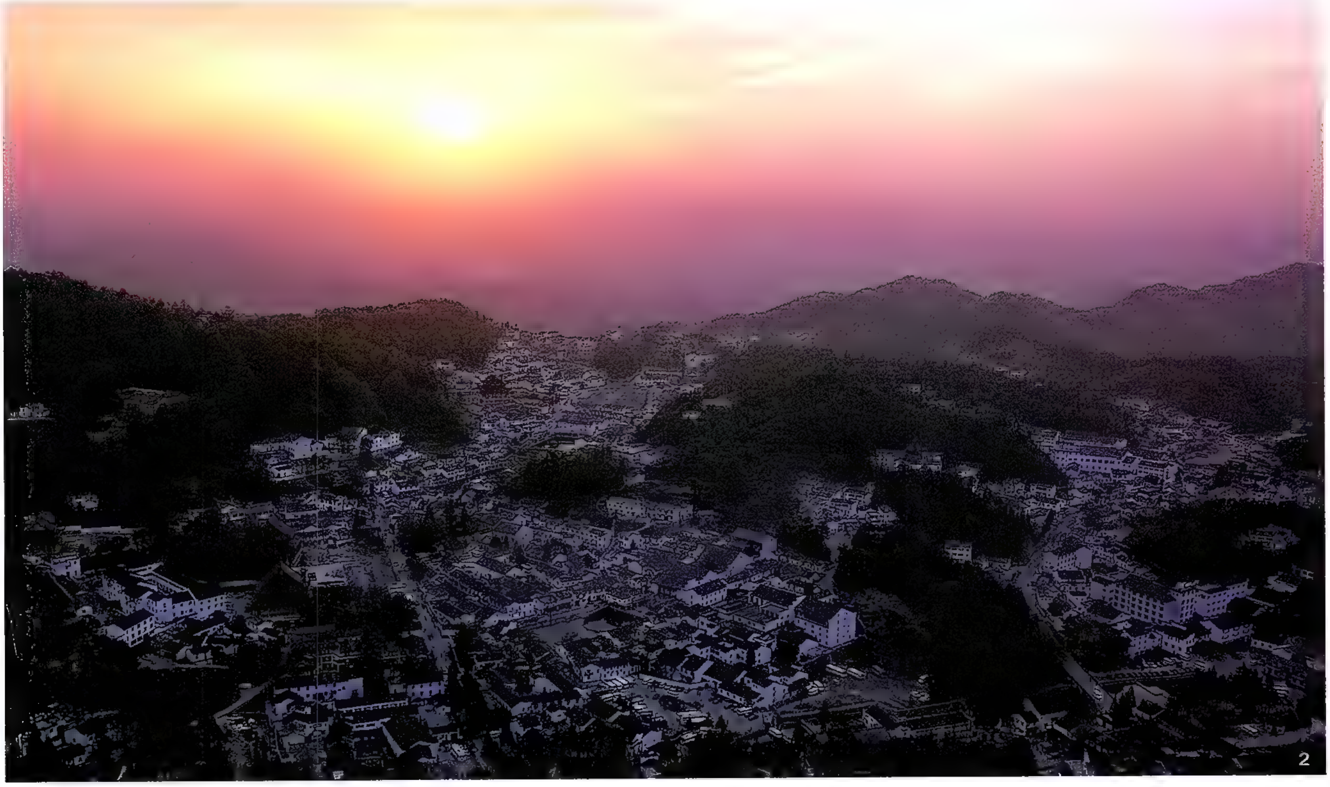
Zhantan Monastery, located to the southwest of Jiuhua Street, was first built during the reign of Qing Emperor Qianlong (1736 — 1795). In 1990 when the monastery was badly out of repair, the abbot, Shihui, initiated a large-scale reconstruction. He moved the monastery to the foot of Furongfeng Peak and built three new halls — those of the Buddha, Great Mercy and Great Wish. Upon completion of the Hall of Great Mercy in 1994, a 9.19-metre-high, camphor wood statue of the four-faced Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva was enshrined in it. When the Hall of Great Wish was completed in 1999, a 9.9-metre, four-faced, gilded bronze statue of Ksitigardha Bodhisattva was enshrined there. The image of Ksitigardha is different from other Bodhisattvas. He looks like a monk with a shaved head and wearing a cassock. The staff in his right hand symbolises protection of living creatures and guarding against evil. The pearl in his left hand indicates fulfilling the wishes of the multitude.

Legends of Monk Haiyu and Nun Renyi

A cable car took five minutes to carry me from Jiuhua Street to the top of Mount Dongya (Eastern Cliff), where a viewing platform was already crowded with people.

To the north of the viewing platform is Baisuigong (Hundred-year-old Palace), a full-scale temple built in the architectural style of southern Anhui. Viewed from the eastern side, the temple slopes down from south to north, with five tiers of buildings altogether. When I arrived at the temple, I found that the floor of its main hall was lower than the ground outside. It

1. Pious pilgrims worship the temples one by one in the rain
2. A distant view of Jiuhua Town from Dongya Temple
3. The unique arched gate at Tiantai Temple on Mt Jiuhua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was rather dark inside. I could only see some shadowy statues behind the altar table. A side door led to the Mortal Body Hall. A small courtyard in front of the hall featured a pond. The walls of the buildings on the eastern and western sides are densely inlaid with Buddhist images the size of a wrist-watch. The inside of the hall was brightly lit. A horizontal board inscribed with the words "Incarnation of Bodhisattva" was given by the emperor in the third year (1630) of Ming Emperor Chongzhen's reign. On the altar table were fresh flowers as well as velvet and silk flowers. There were also ornamental coral trees and jade objects symbolizing good luck. Behind the altar table the remains of Haiyu, a celebrated monk, were covered by a glass case. Haiyu, a native of Beijing, became a monk in the Wutai Mountains and came to Jiuhua to practise Buddhism during Ming Emperor Wanli's reign (1573 — 1619). He lived on sealwort, roots of red-rooted salvia, and other wild herbs. Every 20 days, he would cut his tongue and mix the blood with golden powder. In more than 20 years, he used the mixture to copy 81 volumes of the *Buddhavatamsaka Mahavaipulya Sutra*. He died at the age of 101 and his body was placed in a vat. Three years later, when the vat was reopened, people found his remains intact. The other monks covered his body with gold leaves and enshrined him in the Hundred-Year Palace. I walked over and took a closer look and found that the golden body of Haiyu was in the sitting position with his legs crossed. He looked rather small.

Renyi is the only nun whose remains are preserved on Mt Jiuhua. Renyi, originally named Jiang Sumin, became a nun at Xiantong Monastery in the Wutai Mountains and was given the Buddhist name of Renyi at the age of 29. Two years later, she enrolled in the Shenyang College of Chinese Medicine. In 1951, she went with the army to Korea and saved the lives of innumerable wounded soldiers. On returning to China, she continued to work as a doctor. In 1982, Renyi went to the Wutai Mountains again and was formally initiated in Tayuan Temple. A year later, she travelled to Tonghui Nunnery on Mt Jiuhua and used all her savings to totally renovate the nunnery. From then on, she often went out to preach and treat patients. When she came back to Mt Jiuhua in 1995, she brought with her some rice from the Northeast. After consuming the rice, she was unable to eat anything else and threw up whatever she had eaten. Three years after her death, when her disciple Sishang reopened the vat, she found Renyi's body was still in good shape and her muscles were still resilient. Her half grey hair had grown by more than an inch. When she was first put in the vat, her hands were joined together. Now her right hand had become higher as if she was holding a needle. Her body has since been enshrined in the Yueshu Hall of Tonghui Nunnery.

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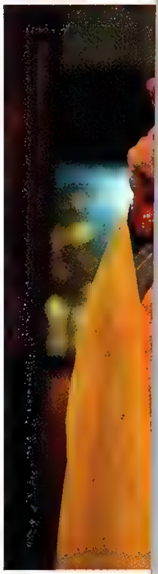

Fewer Litter Carriers

As soon as the cable car going up the mountain from Phoenix Pine started to move, I felt as if I had been taken into the sky. Tree tops and weird mountain peaks swept past below my feet. On a long winding path of stone steps many pilgrims were moving slowly. Here and there on either side of the path were houses or small temples. Floating clouds occasionally obscured my view. The cable car soon came to a stop.

Not far to the north from the cable car stop is the ancient Scripture Worshipping Altar. When the cable car from Phoenix Pine to this altar was built in 1994, it immediately became the principal means of transport up and down the mountain. Outside the altar were a number of litter carriers. One of them complained: "In the past, when we took a visitor up the mountain from Phoenix Pine, we were paid 300~400 yuan. The cable car now takes visitors straight to Scripture Worshipping Altar, only 1,000~1,500 metres from Heavenly Terrace. We now charge only 30~40 yuan, but still few people use the litters."

The construction of the cableway greatly reduced the income of some small temples along the path up the mountain from Phoenix Pine to Scripture Worshipping Altar. In the past, before the cableway, tourists and pilgrims had to climb the mountain step by step. The tourists, relatively better off, donated generously to the temples. Most tourists these days use the cableway to save energy and time. Now it is mainly peasant pilgrims who climb the mountain along the path of stone steps. They do not have as much money as the tourists. I met a man named Zhang Jianguo, the leader of a group of peasant pilgrims from Xifu Town in Hexian County, Anhui Province. He told me: "On the first day of the third lunar month every year, more than 2,000 people from Hexian will come to Mt Jiuhua. Some 208 of us set out from Xifu at eight o'clock

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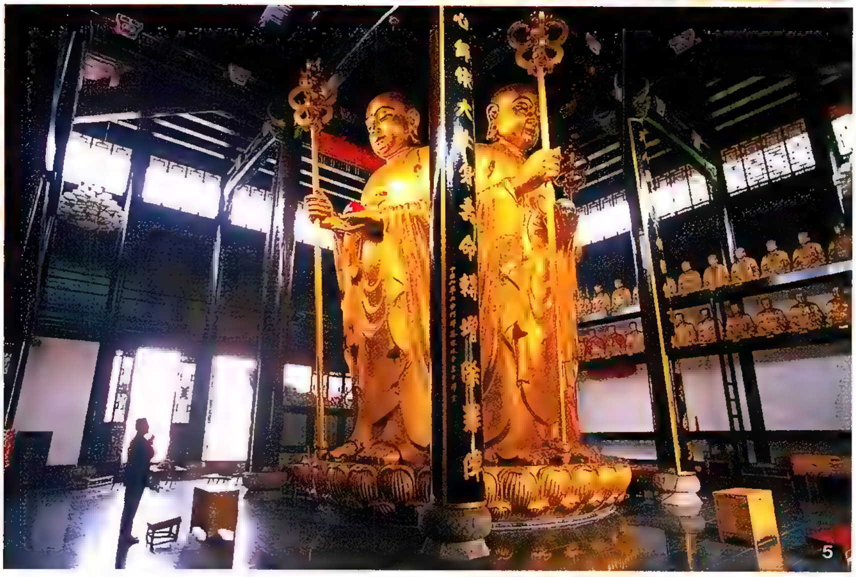

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last night in four chartered coaches and arrived at Jiuhua Street at 2 a.m. As the temple gates were not yet open, we slept in the coaches for more than two hours before we started to pray at one after another of the temples on the mountain. The oldest one of us is Grandma Zhang Jumei, who is 82 this year." I took a look at her. Her silvery grey hair was slightly dishevelled and deep wrinkles ran down her face to her chin, like the shell of a walnut. She munched a glutinous rice dumpling.

Before they set out from home, each of them changed 20~30 yuan into 10-cent pieces and carried the heavy coins in their pockets. On their way up the mountain, they donated a coin at each of the temples. When they met some workers carrying bricks up the mountain, they also gave them money, which they called "ties-forming money". There are altogether 94 temples and monasteries on Mt Jiuhua with over 600 monks and nuns. By the time the pilgrims had completed their round, their pockets would be empty of coins. How much money did they have to spend on a trip to Mt Jiuhua? Coach fare 50 yuan, entrance tickets 70 yuan, food 30 yuan, lodging 15 yuan, as well as money for candles, incense and donations. Altogether, it cost each pilgrim about 300 yuan, not a small amount when the yearly income of the peasants was only 3,000~4,000 yuan. However, their spiritual gain could not be measured in money.

Refurbishing the Tiantai Temple

When I came to Tiantai (Heavenly Terrace) Temple I was greeted by two inscriptions carved on the cliff face, reading "The World of Middle Heaven" and "Non-human World". Inside the main gate sits

1. The gilded dead body of monk Haiyu enshrined in the Hundred-year-old Palace
2. The brilliant Ten-thousand-Buddha Tower at Heavenly Terrace
3. A monk prunes the candle fire carefully
4. Sutra chanting, an important part of the monks' lives
5. The 9.9-metre-high, four-faced, gilded bronze statue of Ksitigardha Bodhisattva is enshrined in Zhantan Monastery, the statue is different from other Buddha for it is shaved head and wearing a cassock as a monk
6. Monks playing Chinese chess at leisure time

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the statue of Ksitigardba Bodhisattva, wearing a Buddhist hat and a cassock. He is flanked by a Bhiksu monk named Daoming and an elder, Mingong.

The upper part of Ksitigardha Hall is the main hall, the Hall of Sakyamuni. The main hall of the Temple of Heavenly Terrace was built of wood and bricks. After long years of exposure to the elements, the columns had begun to rot and the walls to crack. The wooden floor creaked when people walked on it. When a strong wind blew, the whole building swayed. Enshrined in the main hall are statues of the Buddhas of Three Periods. On either side of them are the Eighteen Arhats. A great number of wooden Buddhist statuettes the size of a wine bottle are suspended from the top of the pillars. The main hall is therefore also known as the Ten-thousand-Buddha Tower. A kind-faced monk, Hongxue, came out. After greeting me by joining his palms, he hurried off down the mountain. In the past few years, Hongxue has been very busy with the expansion of the Heavenly Terrace Temple. I had heard about him before I came to the mountain. Monk Kairui is his second disciple and an overseer in the temple. He told me the temple reconstruction cost more than 10 million yuan. Bricks, tiles, stones, sand and cement all had to be carried from down below. A single brick worth 0.12 yuan cost one yuan when taken up the mountain. The transport expense was higher than the cost of the materials. Due to the shortage of money, only 6,400 Buddha statues have been installed in the Ten-thousand-Buddha Tower. The temple was still collecting donations. An extra statue could be added for a donation of 300 yuan.

Behind the main hall is the Hall of the Goddess of Mercy. Below this hall are the monks' quarters and then the Cave of Ksitigarbha, five to six metres deep and about a metre wide. A stone statue of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva is enshrined in the cave because it was said he had immersed himself in Buddhism there.

At dusk, the distant mountain peaks appeared in almost transparent outlines. At the sound of a clapper, monks dressed in cassocks began to gather in the main hall to chant the *Amitabha Sutra*, make obeisance to the Eighty-eight Buddhas, read the *Great Text of Repentance* and distribute food. At the end of the evening class, the monks shed their cassocks and returned to their respective rooms to read scriptures, watch television or play chess.

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That night, the temperature dropped suddenly and snow began to drift down from the sky. The wind outside the windows sounded like ghosts crying. Although all the hostel rooms were full of pilgrims, people continued coming down from the mountain, gasping for breath as they asked for rooms, their eyes anxious and faces exhausted. The temple was very sympathetic and did everything to put them up.

Early Morning Incense and Prayers to Buddha

Bang, bang. The sound of closing doors woke me up. I looked at my watch. It was early, three in the morning. I heard people speaking in whispers and walking about in hurried steps. I got up and stepped outside. There were still many stars in the sky. It was very cold. A bitter wind blew inside my coat collar to my chest. I shivered, feeling as if I had no clothes on. Hurriedly I zipped my coat to the throat, turned up the collar, put my arms around my shoulders and walked to the main hall. It was already crowded with people. The twinkling light from the candles doubled their silhouettes. The air was thick with candle and incense smoke, forcing tears from my eyes. With his eyes half closed, a monk pulled out the incense bundles one by one and buried their burning ends in the ash of the incense burner. He repeatedly told the praying people that each person was allowed to light just three incense sticks, and candles should be taken outside. However people were still walking into the hall carrying big bundles of burning incense sticks. I elbowed my way out of the main hall. The air outside was especially refreshing.

Fudetai Platform on the southern side of Pengriting (Sun-holding Pavilion) is the highest point in all the temples on Mt Jiuhua. Incense is burned there because it is considered closest to heaven. When I got there, the platform of over 10 square metres was already crowded with people. As soon as burning candles were placed on the altar, they were removed and thrown in the iron bucket beneath the altar so that more people could place candles on the altar. This went on round after round. Some of the pilgrims were unhappy. The monk at the altar immediately tried to placate them saying something like: "The Bodhisattva does not want your candles but your devotion. It's all right if you are sincere at heart." Bundles of incense piled up in the huge burner until they burst into flames. The burner became so hot people could not go near it. Many simply threw their bundles of incense into the burner.

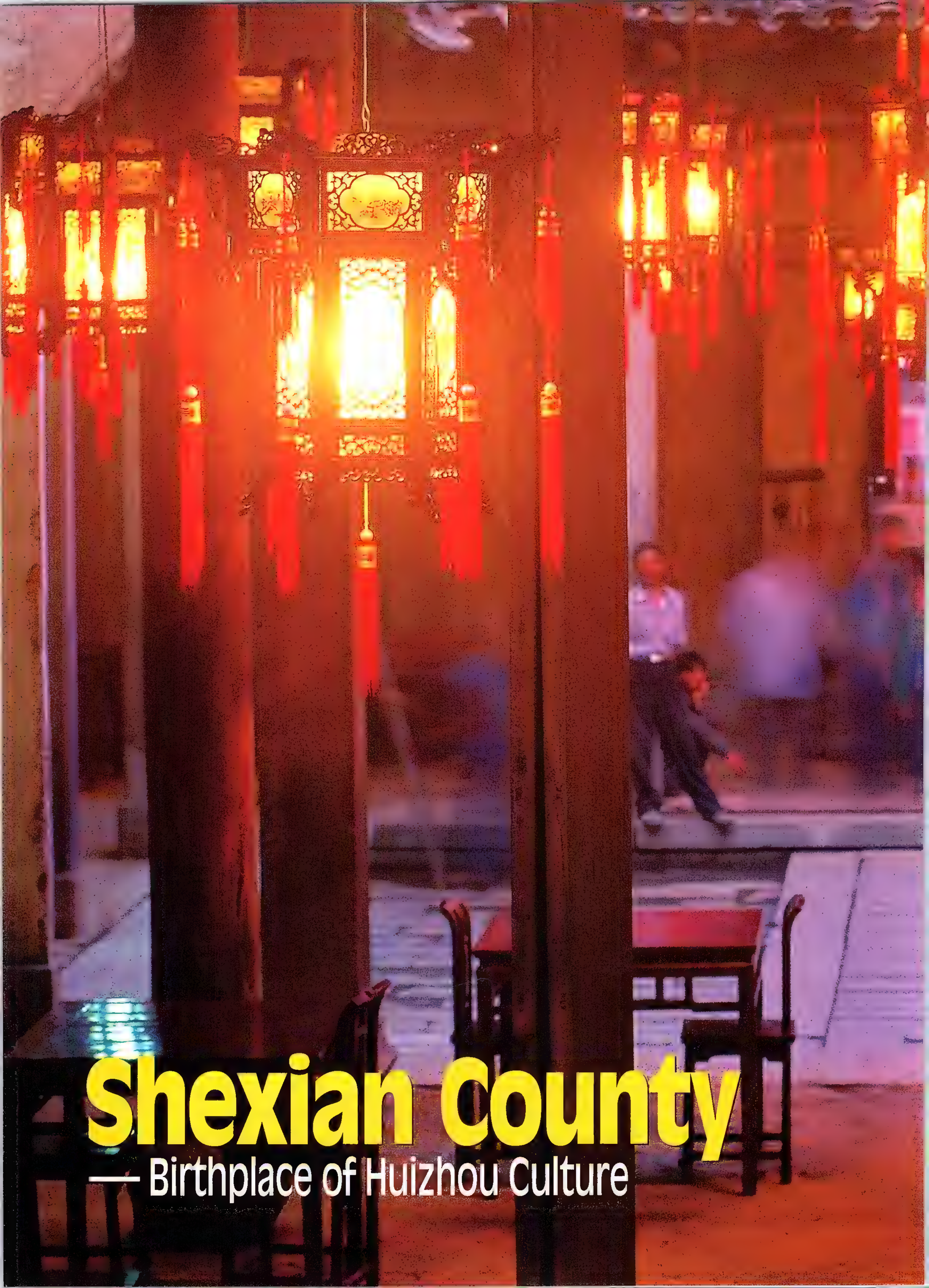
When the sun came out, the praying crowd began to thin out. The big pile of half-burned candles beneath the altar probably weighed 400 kg.

After lunch at the Heavenly Terrace Temple, I began to walk down the mountain along an age-old narrow path of flagstones. I visited the

Upper Temple of Guanyin Peak, the suspension bridge, Sky Ladder, Zhaoyang Nunnery, Fuxing Nunnery, Jixiang Temple and Huiju Temple and then went northward by Phoenix Pine to Jiyin Nunnery, Huixiang Pavilion and the Dongya Temple.

When I returned to Jiuhua Street, the evening scripture session was already over and the temple had closed its gates. As the sky grew darker, the lights in a long row of restaurants and hostels became brighter. Their attendants came out into the street to solicit custom. They were so insistent as if glued to you and would not let you go unless you patronized their establishment. Now and then sounded the blare of karaoke, turning the sacred Buddhist centre into a very noisy place. This has come to the notice of the local government. It decided to move all the shops, restaurants, hostels and government offices to the foot of the mountain within 10 years, beginning from last year, restoring Mt Jiuhua's Buddhist tranquillity. In doing this, the government is surely performing a great service.

1. The paper made to resemble money and burned as an offering to the dead
2. Hanging a "long-life lock" to bless the safety of the family
3. It is said that the incense burner at Heavenly Terrace is the best one for burning joss sticks, for it is closest to Heaven
4. The Hundred-year-old Palace attracts lots of pilgrims
5. Most of the pilgrims still climb Mt Jiuhua by foot to show their sincerity, though the cable car is available



Shexian County

— Birthplace of Huizhou Culture

Shexian County

— Birthplace of Huizhou Culture

Rivers the Best Roads and Boats the Largest Carriers

It was my second visit to the ancient county of Shexian. Generally,I only visit ancient towns once. So why revisit Shexian? For the ancient culture of Huizhou.

Shexian was the seat of the ancient Huizhou Prefecture, as well as the birthplace of Huizhou culture. Culture flourishes only when the economy is strong. For example, the economy in European cities in the 14~15th centuries gave rise to the Renaissance.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, wealthy Huizhou businessmen returning home built magnificent houses to honour their ancestors, and in doing so created cultural values. Once an object has cultural connotations, its economic value soars. In a single day, May 2, 2002, the ancient buildings and arched gates at Xidi, a village of 1,700 people, attracted 60,000 visitors, with admission income alone reaching more than 300,000 yuan.

In pre-highway times, rivers were the best roads and boats the largest carriers. Shexian is located on the upper reaches of the Xinanjiang, so passengers went to Hangzhou by water, and then to other places via the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal. After walking out the South Gate in Shexian, I strolled along the north bank of the Lianjiang River to the Yuliang Dam.

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Yuliang Dam, the largest ancient water conservation project in Shexian, is 100 metres long with three sluices in the middle. The rumble of water through the sluices can be heard some distance. The Yuliang Dock is in the dam's lower reaches.

When Song Emperor Gaozong first visited Hangzhou, he found a small, shabby city. So he ordered the large-scale building of palaces and gardens. Other nobles and officials followed suit. Huizhou is rich in timber, paint and tea production. After loading at Yuliang Dock, ships with a deadweight of 200 *shi* (12,000 kg) sailed along the Xin'an River and entered Zhejiang Province, first to Chun'an and finally to Hangzhou.

Archways of "Loyalty, Filial Piety, Moral Integrity, Righteousness"

Huizhou people engaged in a wide range of businesses, including pawnbroking, timber, salt, tea and ink, with the salt trade particularly well developed.

At the crossroads of Jiefang and Dagujing streets stand the Xu Guo Stone Memorial Archway. The huge blue stone structure, built 400 years ago, commands admiration. On the archway's east side are carvings "Yu Yue Long Men"(魚躍龍門), which mean "A carp jumping across the Dragon Gate", showing that Xu Guo succeeded in the civil service examination. On the west side the carvings "Wei Feng Xiang Lin"(威鳳祥麟), meaning "Bright talent of a prosperous nation". Two small archways at front and rear feature Xu Guo's signature and all his titles.

Tangyue Village, eight kilometres east of Shexian county town, has a 100-metre-long path paved with seven archways of the Bao clan. Though not outstanding in civil examinations, they were very successful in accumulating wealth. The Bao clan is the second largest in Huizhou, enjoying high prestige. The archways are designed with the "righteousness" archway in the centre. Whether entering from east to west or west to east, the archways follow the order of "loyalty, filial piety, moral integrity and righteousness".

Baolun Court — a Gorgeous Ancestral Hall

The ancestral temple is the finest example of Huizhou architecture. An ancestral temple is for worshipping the memorial tablets of forefathers. Compared with a residential house, it is more spacious and imposing. Among ancestral temples in Huizhou, Baolun Court in Chengkan Village is rated the best.

The Dongshu Ancestral Temple, or Baolun Court, is 10 km northwest of Yanshi Town. It is a large four-jin compound, covering 3,000 square metres with four consecutive entrances and four courts.

Previous page: The Ancestral Hall of the Bao Family

1. A teahouse of antique flavour

2. Boat tour on Yuliang Dam at night

3. Exotic night scene of Huiyuan

4. A performance of birthday celebrations in Shouqingtang (Celebrating Logevity Hall) in Huizhou

福如东海大
寿
寿比南山高

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Entering the round gate you can see a system of even brackets inserted between the top of a column and a crossbeam, lattice doors arranged in order, and wide terrazzo walls on two sides. This is the first entrance of the temple.

The second entrance features the gate of honour, facing two colour portraits of door gods flanked by drum-holding stones. A horizontal board above the door is inscribed "Mr. Luo Dongshu's Temple". Pass through the gate and you see a yard, a terrace and a hall. In the yard are a paved path, flower garden and winged chambers. Between the latter two are columns of black marble with meticulously carved dragon patterns.

The fourth entrance is the rear chamber, with the memorial tablets of forefathers, pilgrimage tables and kowtow cushions. It is the most sacred in the whole temple. The rear chamber is three metres higher than the hall in front. If you enter the chamber from side stone steps and look up, you see brightly painted beams supported on delicately carved brackets. I came up wooden stairs to the pavilion and saw a board inscribed with "Baolun Court" hanging in the middle of the eaves.

Hu Kai Wen, Famous Ink Maker

In the late Tang Dynasty, famous ink maker Xi Chao with his son Tinggui, fled from Hubei to Anhui because of war. Coming to Shexian, he found the area rich in pine trees and spring water — vital raw materials for ink making. He decided to settle in Shexian and return to his old trade. Before long, Xi Tinggui developed an ink stick which was able to produce plenty of pitch-black, fine-quality ink. Emperor Li Yu of the Late Tang Dynasty regarded the ink as a treasure and appointed him as an "Ink-making Affairs Official" and granted him the royal surname "Li". Li's ink gained considerable fame quickly. A popular saying is "It's easier to get 20g of gold than

Li's ink." During the Qing Dynasty, Cao Sugong, Wang Jiean, Wang Jinsheng and Hu Kaiwen became famous for ink manufacturing. Hu Kaiwen eventually became the most famous.

There are many varieties of ink. High-grade ink sticks include superior qiyan, tongyouyan, and special grade songyan. High-grade qiyan ink is made from more than 10 precious materials such as tung oil lampblack, musk, borneol, gold foil and pearl powder. Huizhou ink is pitch black and bright, does not run on the paper, and is not sticky when the brush is dipped into it. The ink is fragrant and antiseptic; the colour is fast and will not fade. The manufacturing process involves collecting soot, blending materials, hammering the mixture ready to be pressed into a mould, cooling ink, polishing edges, tracing a design in gold, and packaging. Collecting soot and hammering blended materials were the hardest work. Workers toiled bare backed in oven-like, soot-making rooms.

Hammering refers to the mixed materials being beaten by a pestle thousands of times before being pressed into ink bases.

These days, Old Hu Kai Wen Ink Factory in Shexian is the largest of its kind producing Huizhou-style ink. In 1989, the Superior Qiyan Ink, produced by the Old Hu Kai Wan Ink Factory, won a golden quality qward from the state. Nowadays, it produces more than 1,000 kinds of ink. Most are exported to Japan and Southeast Asia. Recently it has received orders from Europe.

Famous Tea in Anhui

The green tea produced in Huizhou is named "Huangshan Maofeng", originally called "Huangshan Yunwu". During the reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu, Xie Jinghe of Shexian founded a tea brand, named "Xie Yu Da", to process "Huangshan Maofeng" tea.

"Huangshan Maofeng" tea looks nice. Each leaf is about half an inch long, glossy green tinged with yellow. As a leaf spreads out, a shoot follows close to the leaf, just like a sparrow's tongue. To produce good tea, the key is to pick young leaves at the right time. "If you pick leaves too early, the tea will be weak without fragrance. If picked too late, the tea will be too strong," said Xie Yiping, the director of the Huangshan Caoxi Tea Factory.

The best time to pick leaves is from the fifth to sixth lunar months between the Pure Brightness Festival and the day of Grain Rain. One *jin* (0.5 kg) of tea requires 8,000 young leaves. It takes a lot of time to pick leaves and, once picked, the leaves can't be stored for long. So tea farmers have to pick leaves in the daytime and dry them over a fire at night. Tea processing includes selection, cooling, green fading, softly twisting and drying. Heat control is very important in tea drying, ensuring that tea is evenly heated. Too much haste may damage the tea, lowering quality and price.

A good tea should be matched with good quality water. The Yellow Mountain is located in the upper reaches of the Xin'an River. Local people use the clear unpolluted water. Mr. Xie treated me to a cup of "Huangshan Maofeng" tea. When the boiled water was poured into the cup hot vapours rose, rich in fragrance. For a while, the unfolding leaves rose gracefully. The tea had a bright clear colour, pleasing to eye and mind. I sipped. It had a good flavour, stimulating and refreshing. Truly a tea treasure.

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1. Inside an ancient residence
2. The river was the main transportation route for merchants of Anhui during the Ming and Qing dynasties
3. The Xu Guo Stone Memonial Archway built in Ming Dynasty is a rare one of its kind in China
4. The site of an ancient quarry

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Tunxi Old Street

— A Unique Ancient Thoroughfare

Tunxi in the Old Days

When I walked through the ornamental archway into the Tunxi Old Street, the city's noise soon subsided. The street is paved with brownish red granite and the shops have grey horse-head shaped side walls and dark grey roof tiles. Upturned eaves and rafters give the buildings an imposing look, and the windows above carved wooden balustrades and boards on the upper storeys are decorated with ornamental carvings, elegant and classical in style. Most of the inscriptions on the horizontal boards are by well-known calligraphers. The shops deal in paintings and calligraphy, Shexian ink stones, Anhui ink sticks, pottery and porcelain or tea. There are eating places, tea-houses and private museums.

Once Tunxi was a fishing village. When the Southern Song Dynasty set up its capital city at Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, the court found the city not well established and there was not a palace for the imperial family. So Emperor Gaozong ordered the construction of palaces and imperial gardens. More than 40 imperial gardens were built, 10 times the number in the old capital of Kaifeng. As the nobles and high officials followed suit and built their own houses and gardens, large quantities of material and many craftsmen were brought from Huizhou to Hangzhou. In the early Ming Dynasty, a merchant named Cheng Weizong built 47 shops in Tunxi. Four he managed himself, the rest he rented to merchants from Anhui. By the mid-Ming period, these Anhui merchants were prospering. Their businesses included pawn shops, salt distribution, timbers, tea processing, handicrafts, Cheng Xintang calligraphy paper, Wang Boxuan's writing brushes, Li Tinggui's ink and Laokeng's ink stones. At the end of the Qing Dynasty the law of salt distribution was enforced and the Anhui merchants lost their monopoly. Then during the Taiping Uprising the soldiers were said to have "plundered without restraint and the storehouses in the whole prefecture were emptied". When foreign banks appeared in the area, overturning the monetary system, the Anhui merchants gradually declined and withdrew from the commercial arena.

No. 230 on the Old Street is Xingyunge (Flowing Clouds Court), a small shop dealing solely in ink stones. Proprietor Sun Yun, a native of Jiangsu Province, learnt to carve ink stones 13 years ago in Wuyuan in Jiangxi Province, a centre for Shexian ink stones. With plenty of cheap stone, it is a good place to learn ink stone carving. Ink stones now serve little practical purpose; they are bought as works of art and as ornaments. Along Old Street, there are over 100 shops dealing in ink stones. Since about 30 of them are engaged in ink stone manufacturing, there is fierce competition.

精雕歙砚
自产自销
批发零售
黄山奇石花瓶

The Long, Winding Old Street

The Tongderen Chinese Pharmacy was founded by Cheng Dezong and Shao Yunren in the second year of Tongzhi (1863) in the Qing dynasty. The shop is more than 100 years old. Scroll paintings and calligraphy hang on the wall, depicting pines and cranes, symbols of long life. Below them are a square table and a few chairs for doctors to make diagnoses. The room is very deep. Behind an L-shaped counter, a big cabinet with several rows of small drawers contains Chinese medicines. A long line of characters above the drawers says: "Famous and genuine medicinal herbs, lotions, pills, and powders from all provinces." A prescription usually calls for three to five preparations. Each preparation may contain over a dozen ingredients, which are measured by weight.

On the counter sits an olive-shaped brass mortar and pestle used to crush medicinal ingredients. In the corner is a boat-shaped mill, made of iron and worked by foot, used to grind medicinal materials into powder.

砚林轩
小吴村 制毛笔
老街直销点
批发
拾元壹套

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In a side street, I smelled Old Zhou's freshly baked meat and vegetable pies. The pie maker, Xu Yuefeng, told me the shop was opened by her grandfather. After he died young, her grandmother, then 21, took over and ran the shop until she was 81. Xu took over only when her grandmother was too old to get about. As the pies are delicious and sell for four for one yuan, the shop does very good business. Xu wiped her hands on her apron and showed me photographs taken by foreign tourists. She said foreigners kept their promises to send the photographs.

The Old Street is long and winding. One cannot see from one end to the other. Side streets lead to the scenic areas and other back streets.

At the western end of Old Street is the Street-spanning Building in the Anhui architectural style. Further westward is Tunxi Bridge built in the 15th year of Jiajing (1536) in the Ming Dynasty. The bridge is built of stone and paved with green flagstones.

1. Colourful pieces of stones
2. A man sings while selling Chinese musical instruments
3. The simple and unaffected life of local people
4. Shexian inkstone is first choice of gift of tourists

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Jixi County

— A Place of Celebrities

Where Hu Shi Spent 11 Years

Shangzhuang is the hometown of Hu Shi, a famous scholar of modern China.

Although its streets are not wide, the small town still retains the Anhui architectural style of whitewashed walls, black tiles and upturned eaves. Just past Baizhi Pavilion, we came to Hu Shi's former residence. The house has three rooms. In the centre of the right-hand wall in the central room is a portrait of the middle-aged Hu Shi. The room to the right served as the bridal chamber when Hu Shi married Jiang Dongxiu. A wooden bed, cupboard and tables are set out in their original positions. "It is in this room that my mother often punished me at night when I had caused problems during the day," wrote Hu Shi in his book *Sishi Zishu* (My Stories in 40 Years).

Hu Shi was born in Shanghai in 1891. His father, Hu Chuan, became the governor of Taitung as well as commander of the stationed army in Taiwan. One year later his mother, Feng Shundi, brought him to Taiwan. In 1894, the Sino-Japanese War broke out and Feng and her son returned to Shangzhuang in Jixi. The following year Hu Chuan died and the Hu family circumstances began to decline. However, Feng continued to support her son while he studied at a school that charged tuition fees higher than ordinary schools.

At the age of 14, Hu Shi left his hometown to study in Shanghai. At the age of 19 he won a scholarship, awarded by the Qing government, to study at the Cornell University in the United States, majoring in agriculture then in liberal arts. Gaining his Master's degree, he became a professor at Cornell. Aged 26, Hu Shi then became the youngest professor at Peking University, lecturing on Chinese philosophy and English literature.

Hu Shi returned to Shangzhuang to marry Jiang Dongxiu, an illiterate woman with bound feet. Hu Shi was known as a pioneer of the new cultural movement and an innovator in writing in the vernacular. However, despite his deep immersion in liberal ideas in the United States, Hu Shi still acquiesced to the marriage arranged by his mother. He said he dared not opt for "reform" or "revolution". One year later, Hu Shi hastened home for the funeral of his mother and never again returned to his hometown.

Hu Shi later served as the Chinese ambassador to the United States and President of Peking University. Afterwards, he resided in New York, and returned to Taiwan in his later years. He died aged 72.

Hu Shi's former house retains its original partitions, window boards and arched doors. Hu Shi had lived here for 11 years of his early life. His heartfelt feelings have much to do with the home he lived in as a child.

Ink Stick, Symbol of Traditional Culture

Down a lane from Hu Shi's former residence is the Hu Kaiwen Memorial Hall. "Hu Kaiwen", one of China's four famous ink companies, was founded by Hu's family in Shangzhuang in 1756. In the hall are displayed many famous Hu Kaiwan ink products, including "Li Long Zhu", "Gu Yu Me", "Qian Qiu Guang" and "Ba Bao Yao Mo", and ink products named after 64 beauty spots in imperial gardens, the 36 peaks of the Yellow Mountain, and landscapes of West Lake. Visitors can see the "Global Ink", which won a gold prize at the Panama Pacific International Expo'. Ancient books, including *A Collection of Inks, Annals of Huizhou Ink, Annals of Huizhou* and *Shangchuan Mingjing Hu's Family Tree* are on display.

In the early 1920s, the ink market was affected by the introduction of fountain pens. Now, in the age of the computer and the Internet, Chinese brushes and inks have become symbols of traditional Chinese culture.

Hu Jintao, the Pride of Villagers

In Kengkou Village we visited the Hu's Ancestral Temple in Longchuan. This ancestral temple was originally founded in the Song Dynasty, and renovated during Ming Emperor Jiajing's reign. The building faces south, with three small yards. A brook runs before the arched gate of the temple, emptying into the Dengyuan River. Built along an axis of east-west symmetry, the temple looks magnificent. Inside, we saw a large yard and a big hall once used for ritual ceremonies. On the 14 thick ginkgo columns are jujube-carved lotus petals supporting 54 large and small beams. Each beam is an ellipsoid shape, carved with coloured clouds and belts, linking dragons, phoenixes, lions and tigers. Purlins are inlaid with flower petals. There are 10 French windows on each side, carved with lotus patterns. Some are in bud, some are tall and erect and others wave in the breeze. Above is the picture "A Hundred Deer", illustrating deer in different attitudes and positions.

Kengkou Village has become a prime spot, attracting an increasing number of tourists because it contains the ancestral home of Hu Jintao, China's Vice President. Hu's grandfather left Kengkou in his early years, and conducted a tea business in Shanghai and Jiangsu. Hu Jintao was born in Taizhou, Jiangsu Province. Because his father, Hu Zengyu whose his hometown was in Jixi, died during his early years, Hu Jintao's uncle, Hu Zengjin, brought him up. Later, Hu Jintao

enrolled at the Tsinghua University and graduated with distinction. In 1992, Hu was elected as a member of the Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee Political Bureau, and became the youngest member of it. When local villagers speak of Hu Jintao, they are full of pride and respect.

1. The long and narrow lane of Qipan Village
2. The single-log bridge erected on Dengyuan River in Kengkou Village
3. Three carvings of Huizhou — the brick, stone and wood carvings
4. Hushi's former residence in Shangzhuang, Jixi
5. The Ancestral Hall of the Hu Family in Longchuan, Jixi

Ancient Residences in Yixian

— Heritage of the Century

In February 2000 a professor from Japan's Chiba University made an inspection tour of Hongcun and Xidi villages for the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS/UNESCO). In his report to UNESCO, he described Hongcun, at the foot of the Yellow Mountain in Yixian County, Anhui Province as unique. Hongcun Village has many large, exquisitely designed buildings such as Chengzhi Hall and beautiful streets and lanes. Nanhu Lake in the village provides enchanting water-based scenery matched only by cities like Venice in Italy and Amsterdam in Holland.

Hongcun and Xidi villages were the only ancient Chinese villages listed as World Cultural Heritage Sites at the UNESCO conference in Australia on November 30, 2000.

The Exquisite Hongcun Village

One reaches Hongcun Village by crossing a bridge and Nanhu Lake. Along the lake is the Nanhu Academy, formerly a school for children of the Wang clan. Through the wooden gate tower is Zhidao Hall where lessons were held. The Confucius Temple, with a portrait of Confucius, is further inside. In the old days, the shrine of Confucius was kept in the court and students had to light incense and pay homage before taking classes.

Chengzhi Hall, the most beautiful building in Hongcun, was once the residence of Wang Dinggui, a wealthy salt dealer. Wang Dinggui served as an apprentice at 16 in a sugar workshop in Jiujiang. He later opened the Yuanshun Sugar Shop and then the Yuanshun salt shops in Yangzhou and Hankou. Wang rose to become a business tycoon in Anhui.

Chengzhi Hall is typical of the style of luxurious residences in southern Anhui. In the front hall a horizontal tablet bears a painted carving, "Tang Emperor Suzong Entertains High-ranking Officials at a Banquet". A woodcarving, "Golden Lion Playing with Balls", is featured on the back of the tablet. On the middle gate of the front hall is a painted engraving, "A Hundred Children Celebrating the Lantern Festival". In the artwork vividly depicting a festive occasion in Huizhou,100 children perform dragon lantern dances. Two side doors are in the shape of ancient coins and look like the Chinese character for business. The doors feature carvings of battle scenes from the classic novel, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms.*

The front hall is a reception area and the rear hall the living area. Engraved on the stone pillar in the hall is a character "Shou"(壽) which means "longevity". On a horizontal tablet a painted engraving, Guo Ziyi Drinks a Toast to Longevity, shows the affectionate love between Guo Ziyi and his virtuous wife Liang Hong. Guo Ziyi was a high-ranking feudal official who successfully managed the state and family affairs. The rear hall is magnificently decorated in gold leaf.

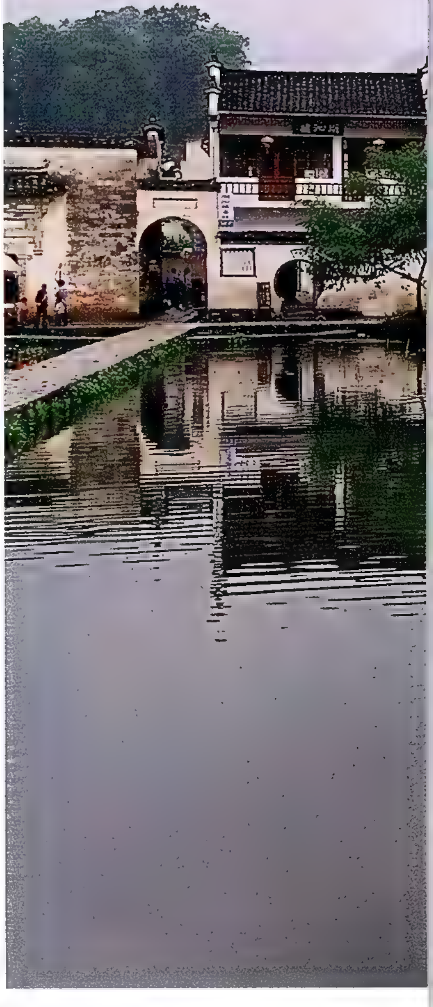
The famous architect I.M. Pei has hailed Chengzhi Hall as a harmoniously designed, exquisitely carved, and well-integrated mansion of the finest sort.

Hongcun Village has a unique, practical, and well-linked waterway system. The clear spring water from the west of the village winds its way through Yuezhao Pool, passing in front of every house before emptying into Nanhu Lake. Lake water irrigates fields and fruit trees and eventually flows back to the Suixi Stream.

Xidi, a Post for Delivering Official Documents

Xidi (meaning West Delivery or Passing West) was also known as Xichuan in the past. There are two interpretations for the place's name. One is that Xidi used to be on a vital communication link and had a post for passing officials to rest on their way delivering documents. The other saying is that many rivers in China flow west to east, but two streams in Xichuan are the reverse.

Xidi is the home base of the Hu clan. According to the Hu's Genealogy, the ancestor of the Hu clan was



1. Benefited by the prosperous tourism in the place, villagers of Hongcun like to play Mahjong at leisure
2. The well-linked water-way system and unique layout of Hongcun impress every visitor

originally surnamed Li who was the youngest prince of Tang Emperor Shaozong, or called Li Ye. In the spring of 904, Zhu Wen, duke of the Liang State, attempted to usurp the throne of Li Ye. He forced the emperor to move the capital from Chang'an (today's Xi'an) in Shaanxi Province to Luoyang in Jiangsu Province. On the way, the empress bore him a son. The fearful emperor decided to hide the baby among civilians. An official adopted the baby and abandoned his official post to return to his hometown. The prince was renamed Hu Changyi.

In 1077 the fifth ancestor of Hu's clan, Hu Shiliang, stopped in Xidi during a trip to Nanjing. Looking at local mountains and the direction the rivers flowed, he believed Xidi a precious place of geomancy omen. He soon moved his family there from Wuyuan and the Hu family began to flourish. Merchants in Xidi mainly ran private banks and pawnshops. The 24th ancestor Hu Guansan owned 36 pawnshops and 20-plus banks covering the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtse River. With assets of more than 100,000 g of silver, he was one of the six wealthiest men in South China.

Like other businessmen in Huizhou, people from Xidi took their fortunes home and built exquisite, luxury residences, a symbol of honour to their ancestors. Hundreds of mansions sprang up.

At the entrance to Xidi Village stands Zouma (Running Horse) Tower, built during the reign of Qing Emperor Daoguang. Hu Yuanxi,

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son of Hu Guansan, was engaged to Prime Minister Cao Zhenyong's daughter. To welcome these illustrious relatives by marriage, Hu Guansan spent a huge sum of money in hiring craftsmen to build Yinguan (Greeting Officials) Hall on the main street and Zouma Tower.

The Archway of Hu Wenguang, a feudal prefectural governor, flanks Zouma Tower and was built in the Ming Dynasty (1368 — 1644). Its crossbeam bears the characters for prefectural governor of Jiaozhou on the front and prime minister of Jingfan (today's Hunan and Hubei provinces) on the back. The crossbeam is inscribed with characters "En Rong"(恩榮) (Kindness and Glory).

Hu Wenguang became a successful candidate in the highest imperial civil service examination at the age of 34. The duke in Changsha who administered Hunan and Hubei provinces, promoted Hu for his achievements during his term as governor of Jiaozhou. Hu Wenguang was also called prime minister of Jingfan (Hunan and Hubei provinces).

Dafudi, the mansion for high officials in the village, was built by Hu Wenzhao, then governor of Kaifeng. Beside Dafudi is a tower with a horizontal board inscribed with words "Zuo tui yibu xiang"(作退一步想) which mean "act on second thoughts". It is said that Hu Wenzhao once launched a determined campaign against corruption, which was opposed by other officials. Hu was framed by them and almost lost his job. Fortunately, a senior official in Shaoxing advised him that eradicating corruption could not be accomplished in one move. The best way was to keep his official post and then oust the corrupt officials one by one. After some years, Hu succeeded in curbing corruption but was passed over for promotion despite working for more than 10 years at his post. Weary of official duties, he retired. He built the tower named "Act on Second Thoughts" and lived peacefully in his hometown.

Jing'ai Hall, the ancestral temple of the Hu clan, is a place to worship ancestors, discuss affairs, hold wedding ceremonies and admonish offspring. Through the black railings can be seen a very large courtyard. A horizontal board hung in the hall has an inscription reading "Jing'ai" (敬愛) which mean "respect and love". The shrines are housed further inside.

Nowadays Xidi Village has 300-odd households and a population of 1,700. Viewed from above, the village looks like a large sailing boat.

Translated by Jin Jianzhong, Tang Bowen

1. Chengzhi Hall, the most beautiful building in Hongcun
2. The unique architecture and landscapes in Hongcun draw more and more painters
3. Villagers are watching folk custom performances
4. The Tunxi Bridge built in the Ming Dynasty

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Travel Tips

Travel Tips for Mt Jiuhua

Transportation:

The easiest way to go to Mt Jiuhua is by bus either from Hefei (250 km / 3 hours) or Huangshan city (156 km / 2 hours). Direct trains and buses to these cities are available from Nanjing, Changzhou, Wuxi, Suzhou, Shanghai, Nanchang, Jingdezhen, Hangzhou, Ningbo, Wuhu, etc. For information on the air routes to cities in Anhui, please refer to the Executive's Memo on p. 87.

Long Distance Buses:

From Mt Jiuhua to	Distance (km)	Fare: yuan	Departing
Shanghai	461	90 (luxury)	06:00
Shanghai	461	90 (sleeper)	13:00
Hangzhou	390	55 (standard)	06:10
Ningbo	609	90 (standard)	11:00
Wuhan	539	104 (luxury)	07:00
Nanjing	270	54 (luxury)	06:00
Nanchang	301	90 (luxury)	07:40
Hefei	250	50 (luxury)	06:30
Huangshan	156	35 (luxury)	13:50
Ma'anshan	216	43 (luxury)	07:00

Tourist Attractions:

Entrance fees to Mt Jiuhua (set): 80 yuan

Other admissions: Hundred-year-old Palace (5 yuan); Zhiyuan Monastery (2 yuan); Huacheng Temple (5 yuan); Zhantan Temple (6 yuan); Taibai Tower (6 yuan).

Jiuhua Street → Shenguangling Ridge (4 km)

Zhiyuan Monastery (Buddhist activities) → Li'an Temple (Buddhism Association) → Huacheng Temple (Museum of historical relics) → Zhantan Temple (3 Halls) → Shangchantang (Hall of Buddha) → Jinshaquan (Taibai Tower) → Roushendian (tomb of Kistigarbha Bodhisattva) → station of ground tram (to Lying Buddha) → Hundred-year-old Palace → Zhongting (Bell Pavilion, panorama of Jiuhua Street) → Huixiangge (Yingkesong)

Ground Tram (from Jiuhua Street to Baisuigong)

Up: 38 yuan	Down: 32 yuan	Peak season (Mar. 1 — Nov. 30)
Up: 32 yuan	Down: 28 yuan	Off season (Dec. 1 — Feb. 28)

Mt Jiuhua → Tiantai (Heavenly Terrace) Temple (7.5 km)

Tonghui Nunnery → Huixiangge → Yingkesong → Jieyin Nunnery → Fenghuangsong (Phoenix Pine) → Huiju Temple → Chaoyang Nunnery → drawbridge → Guanyin Peak → Gubaijingtai (ancient worship terrace) → Tiantai → Yixiantian → Luohandun (arhat mound) → Gufodong (ancient Buddha cave) → Dabei Hall → drawbridge → Fenghuangsong

From Mt Jiuhua to Phoenix Pine

Bus: 2 yuan; mini-bus: 3 yuan Time: 10 minutes

Cable Car from Phoenix Pine to Ancient Worship Terrace

Up: 40 yuan	Down: 35 yuan	Peak season (Mar. 1 — Nov. 30)
Up: 35 yuan	Down: 30 yuan	Slack season (Dec. 1 — Feb. 28)

Baijingtai → Dahuatai → Jiuhua Street (9 km)

Baijingtai → Shuangtaofeng (Twin Pear Peak) → Shiwangfeng (highest peak of Mt Jiuhua) → Tiantai Temple (watch sunrise at Ten-thousand-Buddha Tower) → Yixiantian (odd rocks) → Luohandun → Xiaohuatai (exotic peaks & odd rocks) → Dahuatai → Yingxianfeng (Fairy Greeting Peak) → Wenshudong (Manjusri Cave) → Xiaminyuan (bamboo) → Hundred-year-old Palace → Zhiyuan Monastery

Accommodation

Julong Hotel	Add: Jiuhua St	Standard room: 220 yuan
Jiuhua Villa	Add: Jiuhua St	Standard room: 220 yuan
Dongya Hotel	Add: Jiuhua St	Standard room: 150 yuan
Shangketang	Add: Jiuhua St	Standard room: 120 yuan
Tiantaishi Hostel	Add: Tiantai	Standard room: 30 yuan

Travel Tips for Ancient Huizhou

The area of ancient Huizhou includes Tunxi (capital seat of Huangshan city), Shexian, Yixian, Xiuning, Qimen under jurisdiction of Huangshan city, as well as Jixi in Xuancheng and Wuyuan County in Jiangxi Province.

Tourist Attractions

Tunxi Ancient Street is a comparatively well-preserved commercial street that reveals the architectural features of the Ming and Qing dynasties in China. Paved with coarse reddish-brown rocks, 895 metres of the 1,273-metre road is a pedestrain zone five to eight metres wide. Both its eastern and western entrances are decorated exotic ancient structures such as gateways,screen walls and overhanging storeys.

The street is packed with stalls selling Anhui ink, Xixian inkstone, Xuancheng paper, Qimen black tea, Huangshan Maofeng(high-quality green tea), mushrooms, edible fungus, dried bamboo shoots, lacquerware, and bamboo articles, etc. On the way from Tunxi to Xixian, one can visit the Huashan Miku 10 km from Tunxi, the caves left by former quarrying. Entrance: 30 yuan. A ride of taxi in Tunxi: 5 yuan; three-wheeled car: 2~3 yuan.

The capital seat of ancient Huizhou, Xixian boasts numerous historical sights like the nationally important "stone archway of the Xu State"; "Yuliangba "; Doushan Street which combines ancient mansion, well, carvings, and archways; Huiyuan Garden, Tao Xingzhi Memorial Hall, Huang Binhong Memorial Hall. The Tangyue group archways are 8 km away from Xixian. Seven archways stand neatly along a 100-metre-plus road at the eastern end of Tangyue Village. Bus fare from Xixian to Tunxi: 4 yuan. Distance: 27 km.

Car hire from Xixian to Tangyue: 25 yuan. Entrance fee to Tangyue group archways: 35 yuan. Entrance fee to Yuliangba: 30 yuan. Entrance fees to Doushan Street: 8 yuan.

The Ancestral Hall of the Hu Family in Longchuan is located in Kangkou Village in Yingzhou Township, Jixi. Kangkou is the hometown of Hu Jintao.The former residence of contemporary Chinese writer Hu Shi is located in Shangzhuang Town in Jixi.

Car hire from Tunxi to Jixi: 75 km, 15 yuan.

Bus fare from Jixi to the ancestral hall in Longchuang: 13 km, 2 yuan; (car hire) 25 yuan.

Bus fare from Jixi to residence of Hu Shi in Shangzhuang: 40 km, 8 yuan.

Entrance fes to Hu Family Ancestral Hall: 20 yuan.

Entrance fee to Residence of Hu Shi: 20 yuan.

Ancient villages in Anhui including Xidi, Hongcun, and Yixian in Huangshan, have all been listed as World Heritage Sites. Xidi comprises over 300 households with a population of over 1,000. Regarded by experts as "a treasure box of ancient oriental architecture art", the village boasts about 120 well-preserved buildings, such as Zouma Tower, Xidi Archway, Ruiyuting, Taoliyuan (Peach and Bear Garden), West Garden, East Garden, Dafudi (feudal officials' mansion), ancestral hall of Hu Family, Lifu Hall, Qingyun Hall, Yanfu Hall, Dujing Hall, and Diji Hall. The bull-shape Hongcun Village is also characteristic. Time-honoured buildings in the village include Nanhu Academy, Chengzhi Hall, Chengde Hall, Deyi Hall, Biyuan Garden, and Lexu Hall, etc. The Chengzhi Hall was a luxurious private mansion built by Wang Dinggui, a big salt merchant in late Qing Dynasty in 1855. In terms of structure,layout,design,facilities, and construction, Chengzhi Hall is also among the finest of Yixian's 4,000 residential buildings built in Ming and Qing dynasties. An ideal touring route is to go to the county seat of Yixian first. Take a bus to Juji Village, and continue to Xidi. Then, head to Tunxi directly from Xidi. Bus fare to Xidi, 8 km east of the county seat of Yuxian: 4 yuan. Entrance fees: 55 yuan.

1. Tourists visiting an ancient mansion
2. This archway in Xidi was granted to build by the Ming Emperor Shenzong to praise Hu Wenguang, who had been an official in the area for 23 years
3. Brilliant golden Buddhist statues in a temple on Mt Jiuhua
4. Viewing Heavenly Terrace Temple from Ten Emperors Peak

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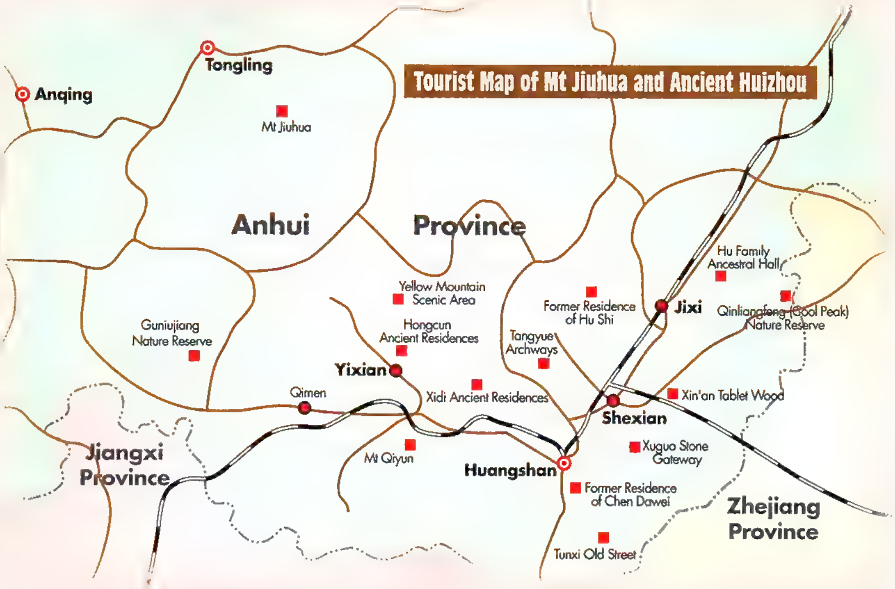

Tourist Map of Mt Jiuhua and Ancient Huizhou
Anqing
Tongling
Mt Jiuhua
Anhui
Province
Guniujiang Nature Reserve
Yellow Mountain Scenic Area
Hongcun Ancient Residences
Yixian
Qimen
Xidi Ancient Residences
Tangyue Archways
Former Residence of Hu Shi
Jixi
Hu Family Ancestral Hall
Qinliangfong (Cool Peak) Nature Reserve
Xin'an Tablet Wood
Shexian
Xuguo Stone Gateway
Mt Qiyun
Huangshan
Former Residence of Chen Dawei
Tunxi Old Street
Jiangxi Province
Zhejiang Province

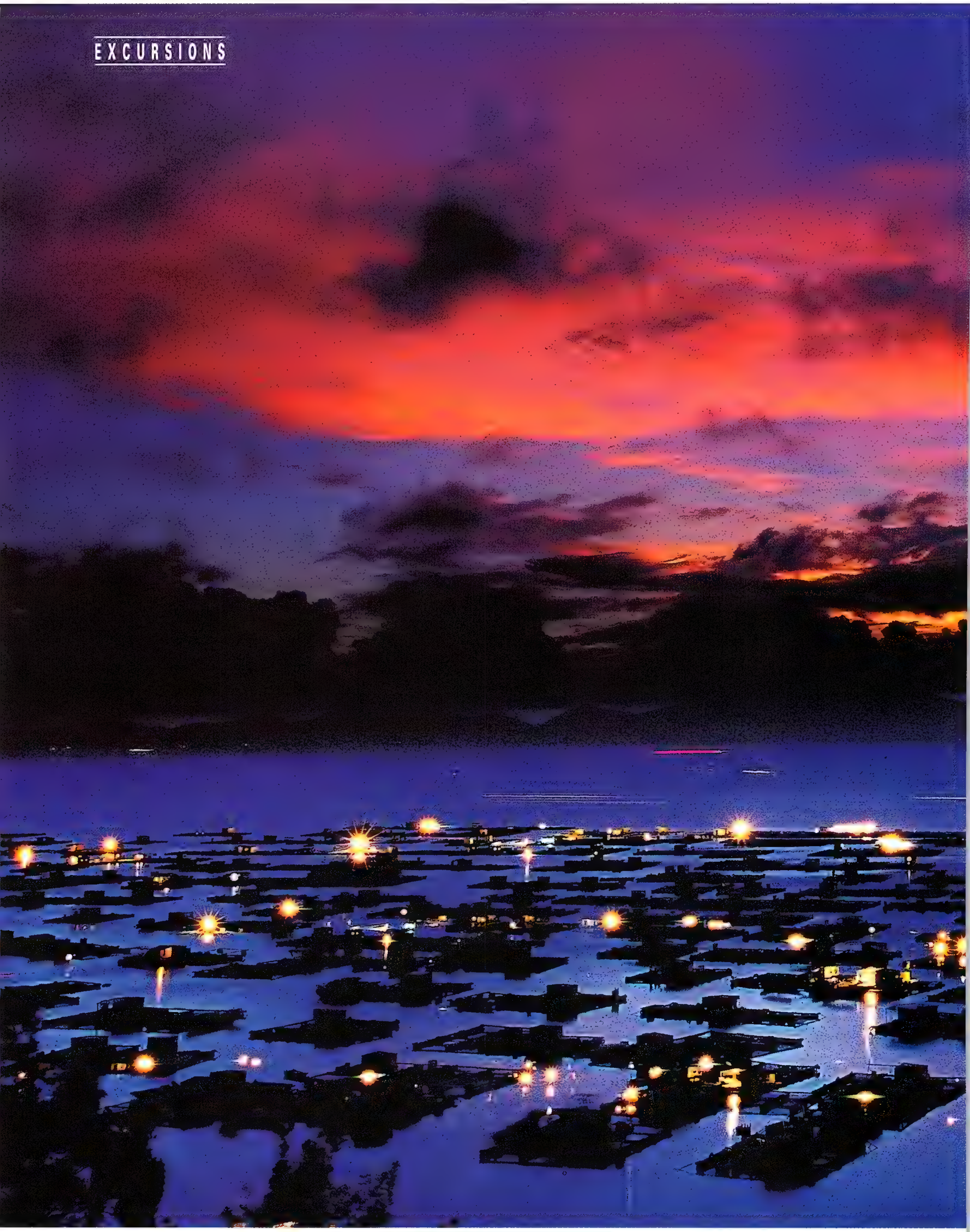
Hongcun Village is 10 km northeast of the county seat of Yuxian.Bus fare: 4 yuan. Entrance fees: 55 yuan.

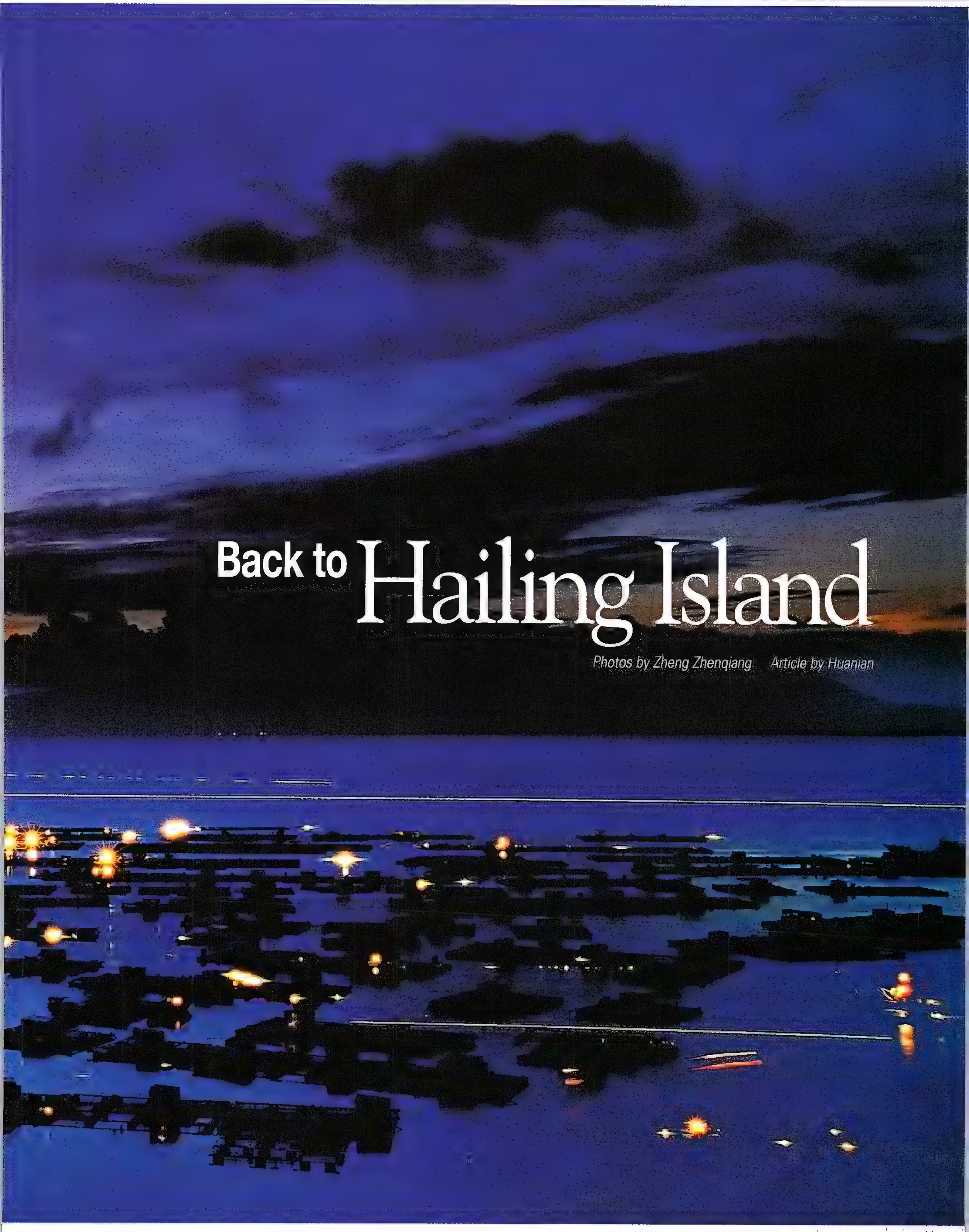
The Longweiyan (Dragon-tail Inkstone) in Wuyuan is one of the four most famous inkstones in China. Qimen black tea, India's Darjeeling black tea, and Sri Lanka's Wufa tea, are together known as "three famous fragrant teas".

Accommodation

Tunxi Xin'anjiang Hotel	Standard room: 150 yuan
Shexian Dahua Hotel	Standard room: 180 yuan

There are also quaint, inexpensive hostels run by farmers. A bed costs 30 to 40 yuan.





Back to Hailing Island

Photos by Zheng Zhenqiang   Article by Huanian

Island of Fantasy and Youthful Dreams

Hailing Island was a paradise on earth well known only to painters when, more than 20 years ago, a few young guys still wet behind the ears arrived with heavy drawing cases and heads full of youthful dreams.

The island was very big and the roads on it rugged. Headlands along the coastline separated the beach into sections. Standing on a no man's beach, watching the huge waves and reddish brown fishing boats on the green sea, we were thoroughly moved. Salty and fishy smells always filled the air at Zhapo fishing port on the westernmost end of the island. Every morning the port saw off the fishing boats and the bright-eyed fishermen with their coppery skin; and in the evening welcomed them back with their catch of seafood. Whenever there was sunlight after rain, the masts of all the different sized fishing boats formed a stunning forest. Our favourite jaunt was to spend an hour trekking to Maweidao (Ponytail Islet) at the most southwestern tip of Hailing Island. A flat sandbank would emerge as the tide ebbed, and we were able to walk to the islet easily and become owners of the place for a day.

In fact, we did not care who owned Hailing Island. Apart from the fishermen living at Zhapo port who occasionally came there to spread nets, we had the vast beach to ourselves. After drawing every day, it was so pleasant that we would throw off all our clothes and swim for ages. And when our backsides turned bronze after a few days we felt prouder than the king in "The Emperor's New Clothes".

I was intoxicated with such a carefree, untamed life and for several consecutive years spent every holiday on Hailing Island. But when my student days were over and I had to start work, my passion for Hailing Island faded and it became just a memory in my dreams.

"Island Owner" Faces Reality in Big Horn Bay

Twenty years pass in a blink of time. By now Hailing Island is famous far and wide as a tourist destination. I could not stop my heart thumping when the bus crossed the causeway. I was no longer a young lad and have seen countless beautiful scenes in the world, so why this excitement about the island I left 20 years ago?

It was like meeting up again with a glamorous and gracious woman whose true self I had known so well when she was young and still obscure. It makes me feel strange to see her now gorgeously dressed, a woman of the world.

Located in Yangjiang city in southwestern Guangdong Province, Hailing Island covers an area of 107.8 sq km, almost half of the Hong Kong Island. The fourth biggest island in Guangdong, it is now crowned as a "4A National Tourist Resort". There have been, of course, great changes.

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Speeding westward along the flat highway, the bus soon reached Dajiao (Big Horn) Bay in the southwest of Hailing Island. Thousands of excited tourists dotted the long beach, colourful parachutes flew in the sky, motorboats rode the sea, beach carts and galloping horses on the sand.... Suddenly a sense of loss welled up in me — I no longer had sole rights to this island. Now it was a funland for thousands of people.

These days Big Horn Bay is Hailing Island's tourist centre. The once quiet place has become a busy town. Kilometres of wide streets heading west to Zhapo Town have been built running parallel to the beach. More than 200 hotels and hostels have been established here, providing accommodation for 20,000 tourists. Both sides of the streets are lined with karaoke night clubs, saunas, bathing rooms, seafood restaurants, and "tai pai dongs". Diners crowd every eatery like hungry locusts. Having settled down, I entered a Chinese restaurant and savouring its appetizing seafood meal, recalled the past.

The Big Horn Bay Beach is not the biggest in Hailing Island, but is close to Zhapo Town and provides excellent tourist facilities. Some 2.45 kilometres long and 60 metres deep, it got its name because the

Previous page: The peaceful bay between Maweidao (Ponytail Islet) and Zhapo port is an ideal place for breeding fish. At sunset, the evening glow and the lights of the fishing boats make an enchanting scene at Hailing Island

1. **The island fishermen spreading out their giant fishing net on the beach was a fantastic sight**
2. **Tourists and fishermen are mere grains of sand on the 5-km Silver Beach**
3. **There are still fishing boats at Hailing Island but they are all power-driven**
4. **Zhapo's busy time begins when fishing boats return in the evening**

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ends of the beach resemble a pair of cow's horns. It is now separated into three sections run by different organisations. The east section contains the Big Horn Bay East Bathing Beach and the Sea Funland. The middle section is a public beach, with a terrace built in the centre holding a huge conch, the emblem of the Hailing Island Tourist Resort. The Southern Holiday Coastal Beach in the west section is operated by a four-star hotel.

The happy mood of the people playing in the waves was infectious. As I joined the thousands of swimmers, my sense of "island ownership" slowly evaporated. People surged over the waves and vice versa, or were lifted up to the crest of the waves or drawn down into the water. What fun! When tired, one can lie on the soft sand and be entertained just watching those playing happily on the beach.

A Surfing Paradise on 5-km Silver Beach

The 5-km Silver Beach can be reached by walking eastward from Big Horn Bay and crossing Big Horn Hill. Viewed from the crest of Big Horn Hill, one can see the azure sea and snow-white spray as ranks of brilliant waves roll towards the coast.

This Hailing Island's largest beach is known locally as South Bay since it is located in the southern part. In the past, we just called it "Long Beach". Very few people visited it then, and we used to enjoy swimming naked, totally carefree. In the distance we saw only masts and sails, as if the boats themselves were sailing in space. Sometimes when a boat sailed towards us, we saw the fishermen were also naked. Some said they took their clothes off to prevent them being spoiled by seawater.

Today, 5-km Silver Beach can hold a hundred thousand swimmers, and has been listed as the "Largest Coastal Beach in China" by the Guinness Book of Records. The vast beach also boasts surprisingly frequent waves. The constantly surging breakers are like ten thousand horses streaming ahead. This is also an excellent place for windsurfing though there were fewer than five windsurfers riding the waves the day I was there.

At its eastern end, Luocheng (spiral shell) City which was patterned on the style of ancient imperial city of Kaifeng in Henan Province, covering 60,000 square metres has been built, with more than 50 buildings modelled on those of the Song Dynasty.

Fewer Masts But Same Enchanting Sunset

I visited Zhapo fishing port on the second day, and the salt and fish smells in the air rekindled warm memories. There are still lots of boats but they are all power-driven. And I no longer saw the magnificent sight of thousands of masts.

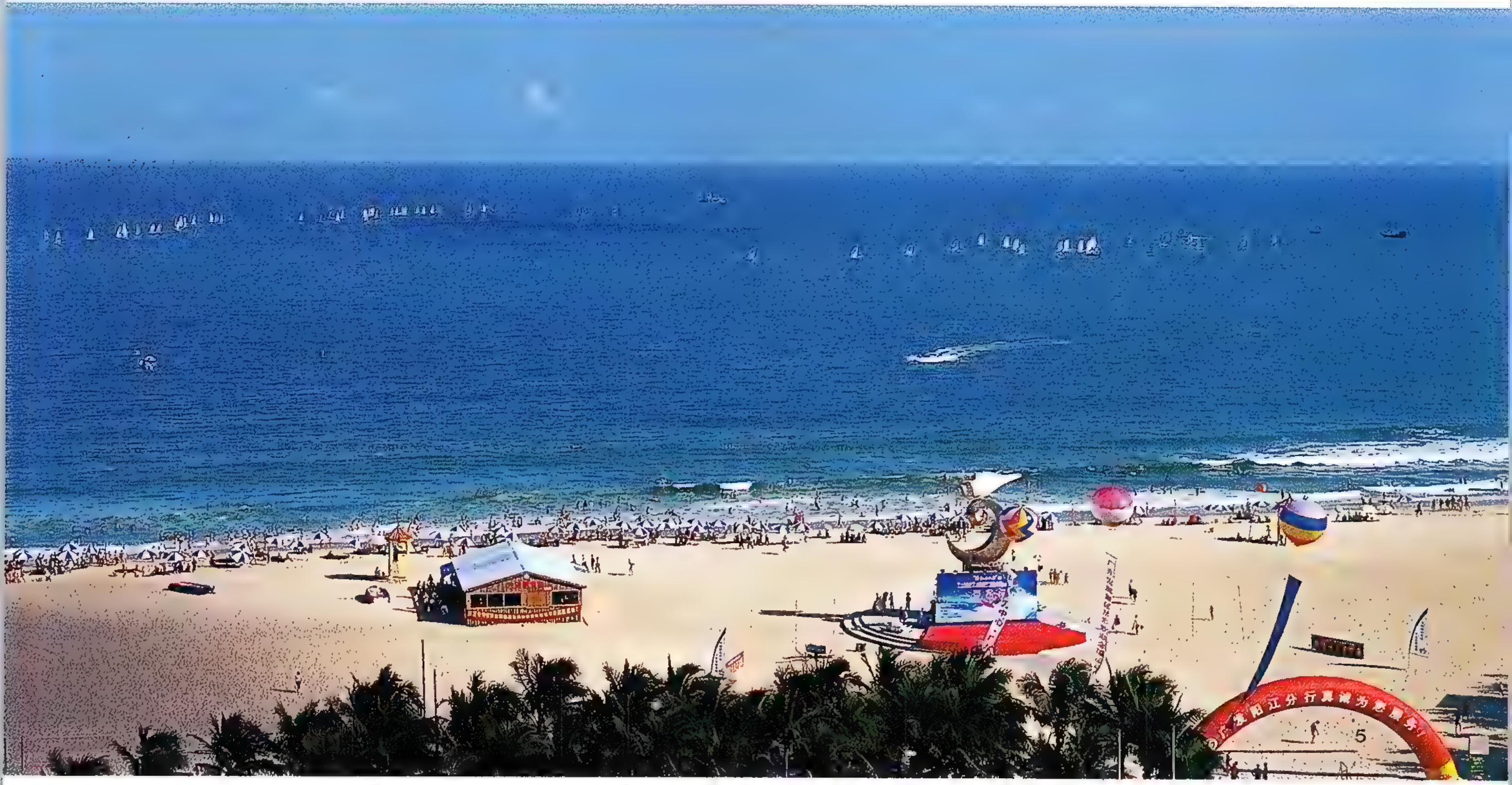
In the old days, I would climb over Wangliao Hill, pass the "One Line Sky" sea cliff, and head for the rugged trails to Ponytail Islet. No one now follows this route for a bus goes directly to Zhapo port, and it takes less than 10 minutes by speedboat from the port to the islet.

Another developer intends to turn Ponytail Islet and its nearby beaches into an exotic, luxurious tourist resort. Fortunately not much has changed yet, allowing me to reminisce about this former "Eden" of mine. When the tide dropped I walked barefoot on the soft sandbank to Ponytail Islet. Thousands of veins in a wavy pattern are exposed on the sandbank when the tide receded. On the veins numerous sandy beads form a network with lots of tiny holes, the temporary creations of small crabs as the tide ebbs. You small crabs must have forgotten me, uh? I cherished this natural harmony, and tenderly walked towards the islet. The ancient lighthouse still standing on the islet saluted me from afar.

Ponytail Islet offers the most enchanting sunset views on Hailing Island. I was lucky to catch one again. A golden glow coated the fishing rafts while scarlet clouds curtained the sky. Then both sky and sea slowly turned rosy, purple, and eventually deep blue. The lighthouse beam loomed more brightly. Lights on the fishing rafts twinkled again, like little stars up in the sky....

Translated by Yellow Dragonfly

1. **The waves on the rocks create unique patterns**
2. **Hailing Island is a paradise for windsurfing enthusiasts**
3. **A national beach volleyball contest is being held at this fast growing tourist resort**
4. **It's great fun enjoying the waves at Big Horn Bay (by Chan Yat Nin)**
5. **Hailing Island's tourist centre, Big Horn Bay offers grand views of the sea and sky**



Travel Tips to Hailing Island & Zhapo

Article by Zhu Jie

Sight-seeing

Tourists to Hailing Island mainly come to visit Zhapo fishing port and Hailing town. With the advantage of proximity to such famous island scenic spots as Big Horn Bay, Sea Funland, and Ponytail Islet, and its well-equipped tourist facilities, Zhapo these days is a popular tourist resort.

Normally tranquil Ponytail Islet becomes a tourist paradise on public holidays (by Zheng Zhenqiang)

Tourists have fun in Beiluo Bay, an isolated beach at the southwestern-most corner of Hailing Island (by Chan Yat Nin)

Must-visits:

Dajiaowan (Big Horn Bay) Bathing Beach: Located southeast of Zhapo Town, this giant beach is 2.45 km long and about 60 metres deep. Its title of National 4A Tourist Area indicates it's one of Hailing Island's major attractions. Besides horse riding on the beach, tourists can enjoy a wide range of aquatic activities.

Opening hours: 07:30~20:00

Admission: 20 yuan

Speed boat: 10 yuan/ minute

Sea Funland: A newly built tourist attraction at Big Horn Bay, the first stage of the funland opened to the public on June 1. The funland contains a variety of slides. You can judge how popular they are from the visitors' excited screams and noisy laughter.

Opening hours: 07:30~21:00

Admission: 20 yuan

Maweidao (Ponytail Islet): A peninsular connected at low tide to Zhapo town, the islet boasts peaceful and quiet beaches, in contrast with jubilant, crowded Big Horn Bay. Hence it is called "a paradise for lovers". Found at the far west of Hailing Island, it offers the best sunset views. While there are many mountain trails leading overland to the islet, it is more convenient to go by boat. Duration: 10 minutes.

5-km Silver Beach: In the centre of Hailing Island is this exquisite beach, though not fully developed. Dining and accommodation facilities are not available, so fewer tourists come here. However, it's a pleasant experience to look out over the whole beach on a sunny day from a nearby hilltop.

Shopping

Seafood: It's very easy to find different kinds of dried seafood in a fishing port like Zhapo with its long history. Specialties include shark's fins, dried scallops, dried fish maw and even starfish. Starfish soup is said to reduce phlegm and stop coughing. Price: 20 yuan/ 0.5 kg. In fact, starfish make nice decorative items at home!

Place: Zhapo Travel Culture Street (opposite Big Horn Bay Bathing Beach)

Corals & shells: As in all coastal resorts, Zhapo Town offers plenty of souvenirs made of corals and shells. They sell for prices from a few yuan to more than one thousand.

Place: Zhapo Travel Culture Street, Travel Boulevard

"Shibazi" knives: A famous brand in Guangdong, "Shibazi" knives are sharp and of high quality. There are lots of shops named "Shibazi" in the Zhapo tourist area which sell a wide variety of knives, such as kitchen knives and those designed for chopping meat, bones, or fruit. Prices range from tens to hundreds of yuan.

Place: Travel Boulevard

Dining

Thanks to its advantageous location, Zhapo boasts a lot of tasty, inexpensive seafood, including crabs, prawns, grouper, and spiral shells. Tourists can go to seafood restaurants along the Travel Boulevard. Another option is to savour seafood cuisine of more local taste at the al fresco "tai pai dongs" open near the wharf. You can experience a truly authentic way of life in Zhapo Town.

Sample prices: Crab: 15 yuan/ 0.5 kg; Shell: 10 yuan/ dish; White flower fish: 35 yuan/ 0.5 kg

Accommodation

There are numerous hotels and hostels in Zhapo on both sides of the broad Travel Boulevard. Those located at the entrance of the Big Horn Bay Bathing Beach are the most accessible for sightseeing, dining, shopping, and transport. It is suggested booking the standard rooms in advance as they are usually full in summer or during public holidays, when their prices may increase 30~40%. Some hotels, however, may offer discount entry to the public beach. Tourists should make inquiries before booking rooms.

Hotels in Yangjiang

Guoji Hotel
☆☆☆☆
Add: No. 3 Qingfeng Rd, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 333 3333

Yangchun Jinpeng Hotel
☆☆☆
Add: 2 Chengdong St, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 773 8788

Laodifang Hotel
☆☆☆
Add: 2 Jianshe rd, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 310 8888

Yangjiang Qiaolian Mansion
☆☆
Add: 16 1st Dongfeng Rd, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 322 3971

Yangjiang Overseas Chinese Hotel
☆☆
Add: 7 2nd Dongfeng Rd, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 331 7890

Yangjiang Haiou Hotel
☆☆
Add: 2 Shangkeng Rd, Yangjiang
Tel: (662) 322 5588

Hotels in Zhapo

Southern Holiday Hotel
☆☆☆☆
Add: No. 2 Dist., Haibin New Village, Zhapo
Tel: (662) 388 0388

Jinfeng Hotel
☆☆☆
Add: Zhapo Coastal Boulevard
Tel: (662) 388 3388

Yinbo Hotel
☆☆☆
Add: Southern Zhapo Travel Boulevard
Tel: (662) 388 9888

Xiang'an Hotel
☆☆
Add: Zhapo Travel Boulevard
Tel: (662) 389 2128

Tourist mansions alongside Big Horn Bay (by Chan Yat Nin)

Tianhai Hotel
☆☆
Add: Dajiaowan Centre Square, Zhapo
Tel: (662) 388 3999

Gold Coast Hotel
☆☆
Add: Dajiaowan, Zhapo
Tel: (662) 388 8888

Tingtaoge Hotel
Add: Zhapo Travel Boulevard
Tel: (662) 389 2238

Jinlong Hotel
Add: 16 Zhapo Travel Boulevard
Tel: (662) 389 1638

Dianli Dujiacun (Tourist Village)
Add: Zhapo Travel Boulevard
Tel: (662) 388 8378

How to Get to Zhapo

Tourists have to go via Yangjiang city. There is a long-distance bus from the Guangzhou Bus Terminus to Yangjiang. But the most time-efficient way is to go from Zhuhai.

The China-Hong Kong City in Tsim Sha Tsui in Hong Kong provides frequent ferries to Zhuhai every day. Duration: 1 hr 10 mins. Price: HK$165. On arrival at the Zhuhai Jiuzhou Port, take a taxi to the Gongbei Bus Terminus. Duration: about 10 minutes. Fare: 17 yuan. Take a bus to Yangjiang. Duration: 2 hrs 45 mins. Fare: 65 yuan. Get off at the terminal station and take another bus to Zhapo. Duration: 40 mins. Fare: 12 yuan.

Transport in Zhapo:

The Zhapo Bus Terminus is on the Travel Boulevard, just a 10-minute walk to the bathing beach.

The most common transport in Zhapo is by three-wheeled pedicab, a single trip costs 2~5 yuan depending on the distance. A ride on a motor-bike is also cheap.

The 5-km Silver Beach (by Chan Yat Nin)

The Sea Funland (by Zhu Jie)

Weekend Excusion in Zhapo

Day 1: Arrive Zhapo in the afternoon. After settling down at the hotel, grab swimming gear and head for fun at Big Horn Bay. In the evening, don't miss the enchanting sunset on Ponytail Islet. Back from the islet, taste the delicious seafood in the "tai pai dongs" at Zhapo port. After dinner, stroll along Renmin Road, the busiest street in Zhapo Town, and hunt for souvenirs on Travel Culture Street.

Day 2: Stay in Big Horn Bay or immerse yourself at the Sea Funland. On a fine day, consider hiring a motorbike and go up a hill to view the breathtaking 5-km Silver Beach.

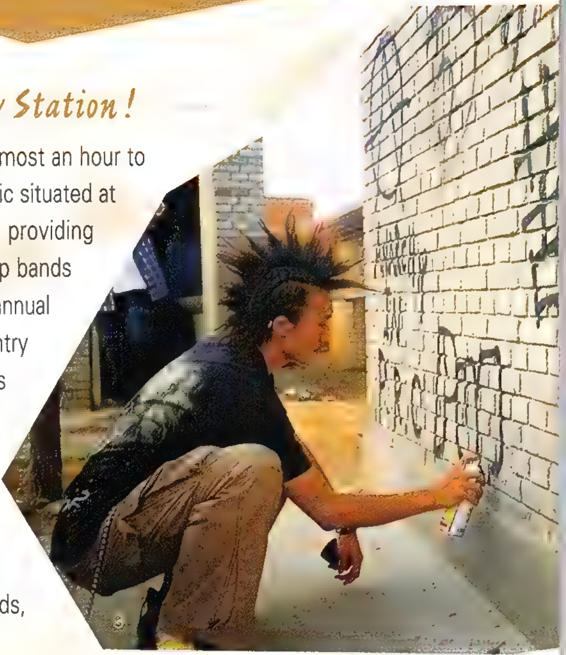
We love Rock 'n Roll

Photos by Mo Huifen Article by Pan Huilian

MUSIC FESTIVAL

Beijing can often weigh people down with its sense of history, but an exciting and totally dynamic outdoor rock 'n roll festival was held at Xiangshan (Fragrant Hill) in May. Dubbed China's Woodstock, it attended close to 10,000 young people, adding colour and vitality to the city of Beijing.

Start at Beijing West Railway Station!



We left Beijing West Railway Station and drove for almost an hour to reach the festival venue at the Beijing Midi School of Music situated at the foot of Xiangshan (Fragrant Hill). This private school providing modern music tuition was set up in 1993, to give start-up bands more opportunity to play and interact. On May 1, 2000 the annual Midi Modern Music Festival was inaugurated with free entry and free beer. Since then it has become a young people's party for the Labour Day holiday period. When the school moved to its new address in Xiangshan, where there is more open space, the stage was moved from the auditorium to vacant land at the school. The bands' enthusiastic response to performing outdoors can be seen by the numbers; the 40 or so bands have grown to 52 bands, of which seven came from other provinces and cities. Originally a two-day affair, the festival this year was extended to three days, daily performances starting at 3 p.m. and ending at midnight.

3,000 People Attend Per Day!

The outdoor stage took up almost the area of a football field and the school estimated daily attendances of around 3,000 people. This hardly compared to 60s Woodstock in New York. But Beijing's Midi Music Festival also has "freedom and peace" as its theme and, when the wildly enthusiastic audience and bands interact, the whole place comes alive with a sense of energy and passion.

The concert was also a perfect time for the young generation to show off their "out-there" looks: red hair, blonde hair, dreadlocks, tattoos, tight leather jackets, lip rings, nose rings, interesting accessories... whether you like it or not, they seemed fully confident of the way they looked and played it up for the camera.

我爱摇滚乐
JoRock! PRODUCTION

Climax After Dark!

The bigger name rock bands were scheduled to play at night, so the atmosphere built up to a climax after dark. Compared to Hong Kong fans, mainlanders are no less wild. They danced, screamed, cheered — the more worked up fans even took off their tops and rushed on stage, keeping the security personnel rather busy. As well as hard rock bands, jazz ensembles and country music groups also performed, the organisers posted band names and order of appearance outside every day, so music fans could take their pick.

Activities below the stage were just as colourful. Some fans had brought their beloved skateboards to skate their hearts out, others brought food for a festive picnic. Groups gathered to swap music talk, even play impromptu, attracting audiences of their own. Young people liked to show off their graffiti skills on the low walls around the venue. Don't get them wrong, even though the crowd was having a wild time, most were warm and friendly, eager to talk to other people.

The Bands Are Good!

A young girl with short red hair and wearing black leather said she spent almost an hour dressing. Because her friends were playing at the concert she came to show support. Coming here made her feel happy and relaxed, as well as enabling her to meet lots of new friends. An American student learning Mandarin in Beijing said it was his first time here, he thought it was new and fun, the bands were of high quality, he did not expect Beijing to have this type of concert.

As the festival site was on the outskirts of the city, transport was not convenient. Those music lovers wanting to stay till the last minute came prepared, bringing sleeping bags or tents to camp in the school grounds, enjoying a night under the stars. The school had opened some student dormitories and the main hall, to let visitors stay if necessary.

One Yuan Beer!

The concert also brought business opportunities. Every afternoon the locals set up cooked food and fresh fruit stalls outside the school and did a roaring trade. Here, eating was not a problem. Due to the expanded scale of this year's activities, the beer was no longer free, but was sold at one yuan per bottle only. So it was still the popular drink of choice inside and outside the venue.

Previous page: Beijing music fans are no less wild than Hong Kong fans

1. **Fans take the best spot on the lawn in front of the stage**
2. **Youth wearing interesting "earrings"**
3. **It is not hard to find lone graffiti artists at another corner of the school**
4. **Avant-garde red hair and Mohawk show festival—goers' dedication**
5. **Stands selling music magazines and CDs at the concert venue**

Nikon

Entrance Is Still Free!

Zhang Fan, the founder and current principal of Midi Music School said the school is very concerned about festival security. In these three years there have been no unpleasant incidents and the police who occasionally patrol the venue have not interrupted the music. After this year's experience of holding the festival outdoors for the first time, the organisers' only hope is for an even better concert next year. Because the concert is non-profit making, the school can only sponsor bands' food and accommodation and cannot pay for their travel costs. So far no Hong Kong or Taiwan bands have been invited as Zhang Fan doubts whether rock bands from these places would be interested in paying their own way to attend a non-profit event. After all, he promised that the entrance of next year's Midi Festival will still be free.

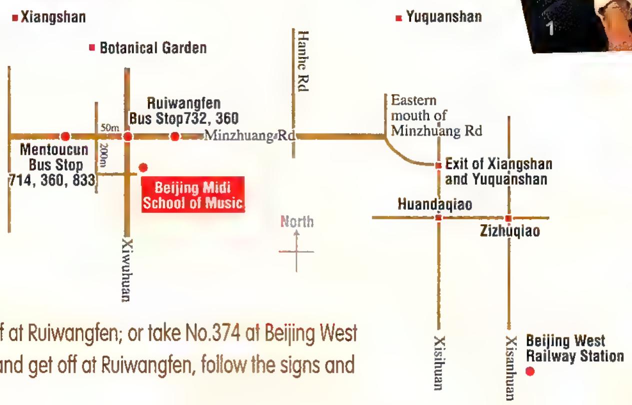
Translated by Cheng Lei

Travel Tips

Beijing Midi School of Music
Address: 12 Ruiwangfen Jia, Haidian District, Beijing
Tel: (10) 6259 0101
Website: http://www.midischool.com.cn

Transport: For the duration of the festival the organisers arranged for shuttle buses from Beijing West Railway Station. (For more details, pls enquire at the school)

Public Bus: Take No. 414 at Beijing West Railway Station, get off at Liulinguan, change to No. 833 and get off at Ruiwangfen; or take No.374 at Beijing West Railway Station, get off at Beiwa Road, then take No. 360 and get off at Ruiwangfen, follow the signs and walk to the concert venue (seven minutes).

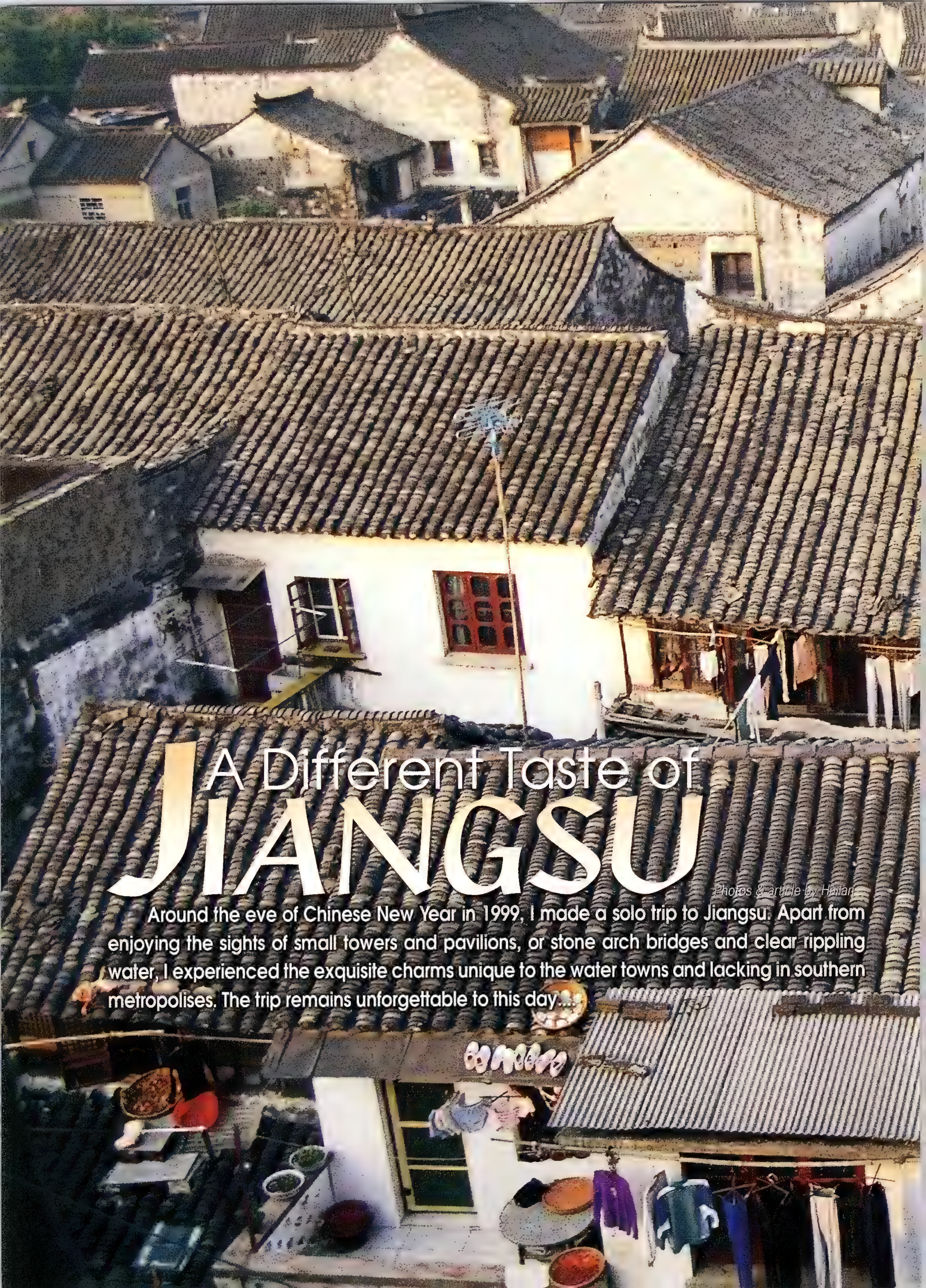

Xiangshan
Yuquanshan
Botanical Garden
Hanhe Rd
Ruiwangfen
Bus Stop732, 360
Eastern
mouth of
Minzhuang Rd
50m
Minzhuang Rd
Mentoucun
Bus Stop
714, 360, 833
200m
Exit of Xiangshan
and Yuquanshan
Beijing Midi
School of Music
Huandaqiao
North
Zizhuqiao
Xiwuhuan
Xisihuan
Xisanhuan
Beijing West
Railway Station

Food: The school canteen provides cheap lunch and dinner, at 5 yuan per person. There are plenty of cooked foods and fresh fruits stalls around the venue.

Closest accommodation to the school: Botanical Institute Reception Centre, Botanical Garden Hotel and Fragrant Hill Hotel, all within 5~10 minutes by car from the school. The school opens some of the student dormitories and the main hall for those with sleeping bags to stay in. Those with tents can camp within the school grounds.

Left page: Devoted saxophone player, photography lovers and singer stir fans into a frenzy

1. **Zhang Fan, Principal of the Midi School of Music**
2. **The concert atmosphere heats up after dark**



A Different Taste of JIANGSU

Photos & article by Hailan

Around the eve of Chinese New Year in 1999, I made a solo trip to Jiangsu. Apart from enjoying the sights of small towers and pavilions, or stone arch bridges and clear rippling water, I experienced the exquisite charms unique to the water towns and lacking in southern metropolises. The trip remains unforgettable to this day....

Snapshots of Suzhou

During the few days spent in Suzhou, I toured the famous gardens, such as the Zhuozheng Garden, Liuyuan (Lingering Garden), Lion Wood, Wangshi (Master of the Nets) Garden and Tuisi (Meditation in Retirement) Garden. Wangshi Garden left the deepest impression, memorable not just for its petite, elegant classical garden, but also for the narrow winding path leading into the garden. With my head down, I made my way along the winding cobble-stoned Kuojiatou Alley, dodging the occasional alley resident on a bicycle coming towards me. I noted with surprise the terracotta roofs of every family house and colourful clothing of every variety; it seemed as if they were made to be there. In a few minutes walking, the Wangshi Garden revealed its unique character. Its original meaning is a sense of calm and lightness of heart; isn't this the attitude of "I do not aspire to riches, nor do I care for the wealthy"?

1. Zhuozheng Garden in winter fills one with an air of lonely desolation
2. The outside of classical Wangshi Garden actually has surprisingly modern touches

A Glimpse of Zhouzhuang

Zhouzhuang is far too well known at home and abroad. This bridge, that boat, those pigs' trotters from Zhou Wansan have all achieved celebrity status. Every time I sort through my photographs and see the "Boat beneath the bridge", "Washing laundry beside the river's edge" or "Painting on the riverside" type pictures identical to everybody else, I am left confused and frustrated. Luckily, even in popular spots you can find different scenery: so why not try visiting Zhouzhuang in spring and, after a tour of the river town, then walk to Xinluo Village nearby? It is a great place for keen photographers with the colourful sight of the rapeseed flowers. Or just take in the unforgettable beauty of the Jiangnan spring.

3. The picture is still composed of traditional stone bridge and wooden boat, but the feel is decidedly different in the soft and serene evening light (by Jerry Shiu)
4. A trip to Zhouzhuang is ideal in spring, when you can see the beauty of the water town as well as the rape flowers in bloom (by Jerry Shiu)

【Luzhi Treats】

When I first visited Luzhi, it had just been developed, and the transport system wasn't yet ready. I fumbled my way there and gave the crowds flocking to the popular scenic spots a miss by going in the opposite direction. I reached the outskirts of the scenic areas and was able to see the more original and unpolished sights of the old town.

Luzhi has many authentic speciality stores. If you arrive in the morning, the pancake stalls are not to be missed. Piping hot and deliciously fragrant pancakes straight out of the oven can be had for only a few cents in RMB, and the taste is irresistible. Walking straight into the small alleys, you'll find a myriad of hand-made rattan goods unique to the water town regions. You may not be able to take away rattan chairs and rattan baskets, but why not buy a pair of well-made and practical rattan shoes for only a few yuan!

Only the most seasoned and curious adventurers would risk entering a plain unvarnished grocery store filled with the smell of sour pickles. But locals love to browse for goodies here. They choose their favourites from rose and orchid vegetables to green radishes and Luzhi radishes. The experience of the water towns is not merely visual, but also can be enjoyed by the tastebuds.

5. Visitors to the Luzhi pancake shop in the morning are in for a tasty treat, but need to have patience

6. Stone bridges and wooden boats are visual elements usually found in water town scenery, but Luzhi offers a deeper and more intimate experience

7. Everything big or small in the shop, from rattan chairs to shoes are all hand-made by the old granny

【A Night to Savour in Tongli】

Fortunately I spent a night in Tongli. Having nothing to do, I took a stroll alone on the street. The shops were all shut, only the small antique store had its door half-open. I poked my head in to have a look and was warmly invited in by the manageress. After she recognized me as a customer from the morning, she made tea for me and we enjoyed a casual chat. Once she realised that I had come to Tongli by myself from Hong Kong, she could not hide her admiration and was somewhat concerned. It made me, a lone traveller, feel at home even though I was far away from it. I will never forget Tongli's friendly touch.

8. The antique store in Tongli does not just sell goods, it also serves up warm friendliness to visitors from afar

9. Usually tourists only spend half a day in Tongli and leave after visiting the Tuisi Garden

Travel Tips

Transport: Hong Kong $\xrightarrow{\text{Flight}}$ Shanghai $\xrightarrow[\text{30 minutes}]{\text{Train / Bus}}$ Suzhou $\xrightarrow{\text{Bus}}$ Luzhi/ Zhouzhuang/ Tongli
30 minutes/ 1.5 hours / 35minutes

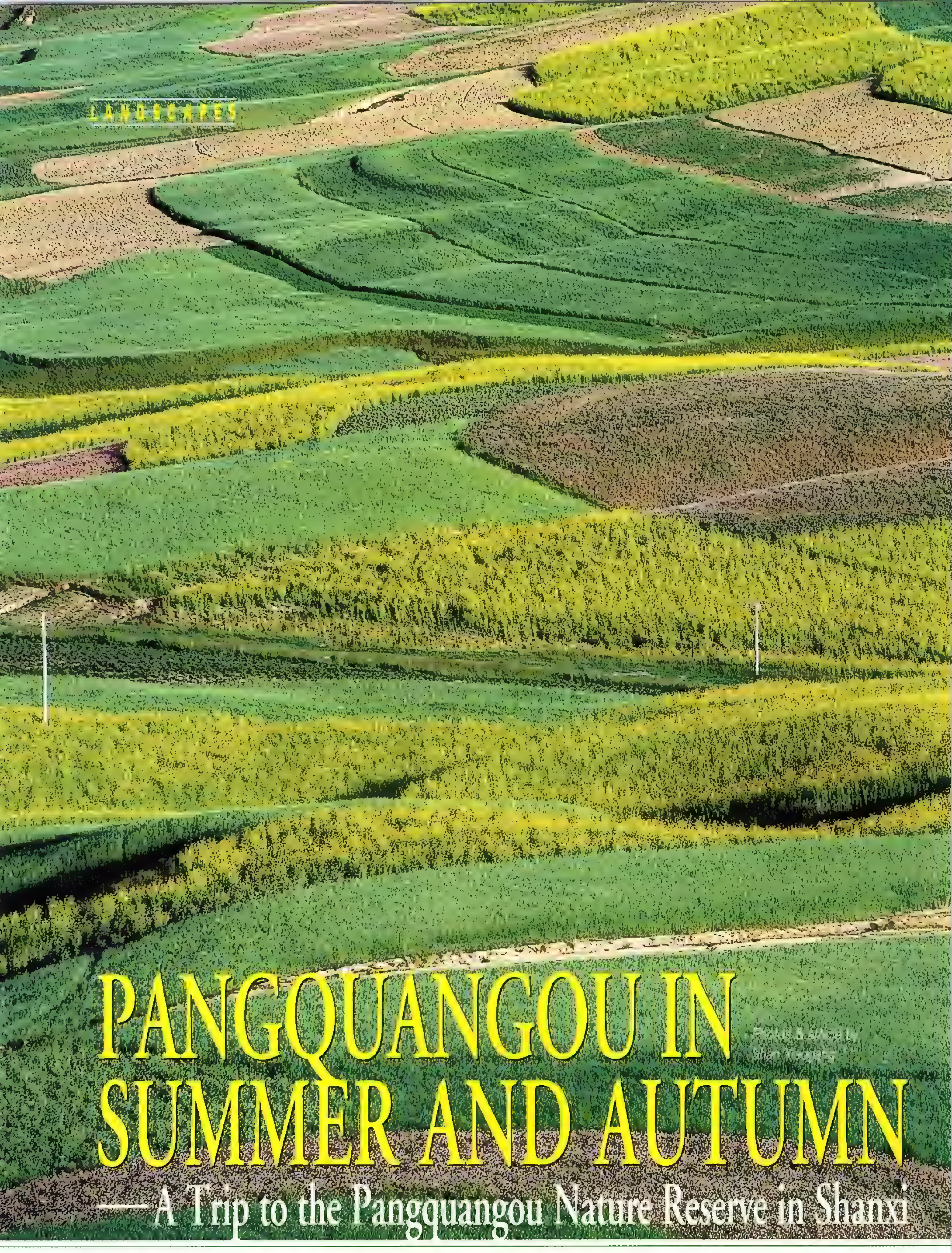
Shanghai $\xrightarrow{\text{Bus}}$ Luzhi/ Zhouzhuang/ Tongli
1 hour / 1.5 hours / 2 hours

Accommodation:

Location	Hotel	Address	Phone	Features
Suzhou	Wugong Sheraton	388 Xinshi Road	512-5103388	Lavish, antique-style architecture
Luzhi	Shanghai Xingdian Resort	260 Dongyuan Yijing Garden Villas, Luzhi	512-5012996	Well managed and reasonably priced
Zhouzhuang	Jinya Inn	Zhouzhuang Old Town	520-7212020	Only 2 minutes away from the Hall of the Chen Family
Tongli	Sanyuan Grand Hotel	Tongli Town	12-333102	Close to the old town

Climate in Jiangsu:

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average°C	1.9	3.8	8.4	14.7	20	24.5	28.2	27.9	22.9	16.9	10.7	4.5
Rainfall days	8	9.5	11	12	11	10	12	11	10	8	9	7



PANGQUANGOU IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

—A Trip to the Pangquangou Nature Reserve in Shanxi

Photos & article by
Shan Xiaoping

In midsummer, the Pangquangou Nature Reserve in the middle part of the Luliang Mountain Range in Shanxi Province is a piece of greenery covered by enchanting wild flowers. While in the cool breeze of autumn, it is sheer golden and red. In its bright autumn colours, the dense rolling forest is at its most resplendent.

Pangquangou in Midsummer

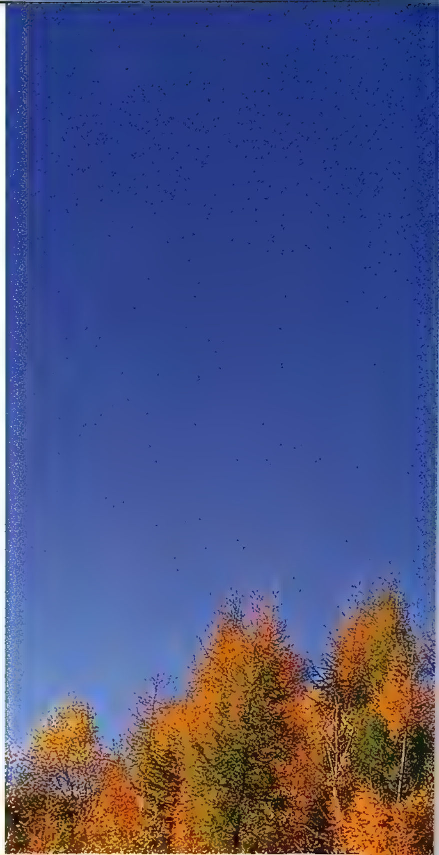
The evergreen Chinese pines brought to mind my midsummer visit to Pangquangou (Pangquan Valley), when the luxuriantly green mountains and countryside stretched into the distance. A gurgling sound attracted me to a little stream hidden behind lush bushes, its banks clustered with colourful flowers.

We rose before daybreak and climbed to the top of the mountain. The steep paths led us to a vast plateau. Before we could catch our breath, the red sun rose right before us. Excitedly we cheered, jumping and rolling on the soft grass.

As the sun's golden rays spread, the morning mist receded and the mountain top emerged. We were delighted by the fairytale-like wonderland — a wide swathe of thick grass covered the heights like a green blanket. Some small red flowers, fresh in the morning dew, seemed newly coaxed by the sun from their buds. Their elegant stems danced to the breeze's light tune. Standing high above the grassland were spruces, tall and erect, eager to welcome the sun.

Standing on the cliff, I could see distant mountain ranges. Where the mist cleared, herds of horses appeared leisurely grazing. They called to their foals and their loud neighing echoed in the valley. Set loose by the villagers, these horses were such free spirits they seemed heaven sent. But when we approached, they became uneasy. Not wanting to disturb them, we left quietly.

1. **The former floodland now looks like pieces of soft, beautiful "carpets"**
2. **City students are delighted to see a flock of sheep by the stream**
3. **Pangquan Valley, with its rich vegetation and fresh air, is an ideal place for a forest experience and getting close to nature**



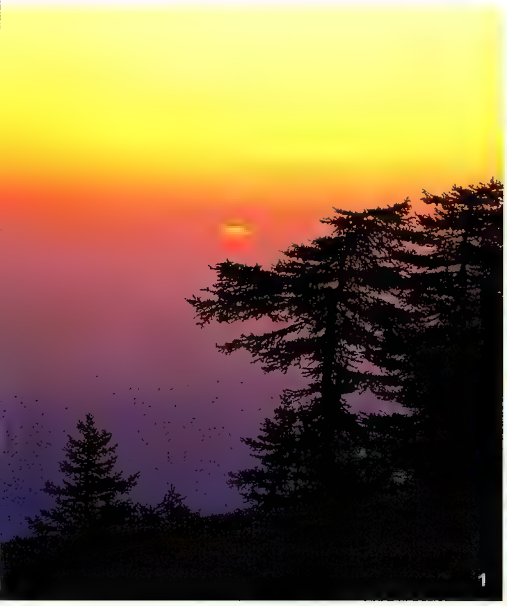
Pangquangou in Autumn

The next time I came to Pangquangou, it was already in deep autumn. Our car drove quickly from the town. There were simply too many beautiful things to see. The mountains, valleys and trees had all changed from their verdant summer garb into colourful autumn costumes.

Breaking away from the city's concrete prison, I came here to thoroughly enjoy the blessings of Mother Nature. My walk disturbed some hares that scurried off into the woods. A grey squirrel jumped swiftly over my head, its tail brushing down a shower of leaves and some pheasants sprang from the bushes. The well-known pheasant, crossopilon montchuricum, instead of being aggressive as usual, jumped quickly over the bushes, perhaps for fear of losing their beautiful tail feathers. If cornered, they stood with their tails pointing up defensively while making threatening noises.

Deep in the valley, hundreds of plant and flower species offered up autumn's splendid charms. A pond as calm as a mirror was covered with fallen leaves like a fleet of fairy boats or dragon scales. Pangquangou, so tranquil and undisturbed, made me feel strangely uneasy. Heart jumping wildly, I wondered if I had entered the world of the immortal.

In the afternoon, murky clouds gradually covered the clear blue sky. A strong cold wind stirred the trees. Their soughing seemed to foreshadow winter.



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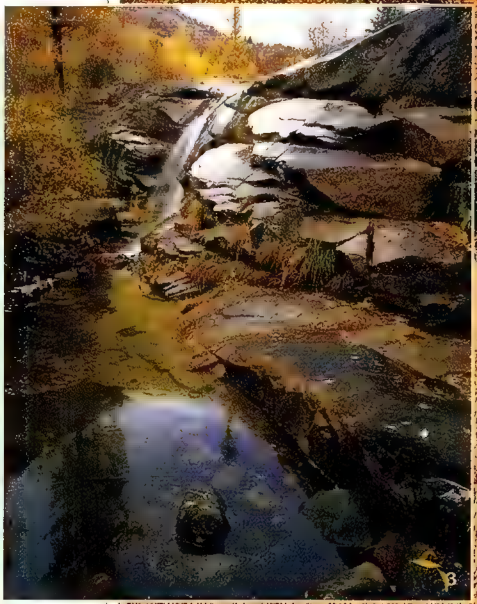

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We waited some time in a pavilion on a col, hoping a spectaclular sunset would appear. But the sun had set behind the western hills and the sky was leaden. Disappointed, we packed our bags, walked down.

We took a short break at the Yangtai Farm near Bijia Peak. Restless, I walked into the yard. Just then the dense dark clouds parted and the sun's golden rays peeped through shafting down upon the icy mountain ridge. Bijia Peak was emblazoned by the setting sun and the birch forest below appeared in a splash of gold. I appreciated this was a rare sight, to be seen only a few times in a life.

A big snow fell the next day. Stepping on the first snow of winter, I went to Pangquangou again. The scenery had changed so much overnight — a riotous profusion of leaves covered the ground, with the silver birches dazzling white in sharp contrast to the dark green larches. The oaks stretched their crooked branches, and the bushes were full of brambles. Ripe bunches of yellow and red sallow thorn fruit hung heavily by the roadside, making my mouth water. Some rare pheasants emerged from the woods to feast on them. Their gorgeous plumage and beautiful tail feathers shone more brilliantly in the snow.

1. Sunrise from Yunding Mountain
2. The silver birches and green pines in autumn
3. Waterfall, crystal-clear pond, and falling leaves make Pangquangou look especially tranquil
4. What a beautiful picture of pines and a wheatfield under a blue sky!

Tips for the Traveller

- **Topography:** The Pangquangou Nature Reserve has a complicated topography, with steep mountains and deep valleys over 1,600 metres above sea level. The highest, Xiaowen Peak, is 2,830 metres high.
- **Climate:** Located in the high, cold zone, Pangquangou Nature Reserve is rather cool, with 100~130 days free of frost and about 800 mm of rain a year. The valley stream runs all year.
- **Transport:** The shuttle bus to the Pangquangou Nature Reserve from the West Station at Xiaowang Village in Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province costs about 16 yuan. It takes around 4 hours. Tel: 351-6064147
- **Address:** Hengjian Town, Jiaocheng Town
- **Tel:** 358-3084439
- **Entrance fee:** 12 yuan
- **Accommodation:** About 160 yuan for a standard room in Pangquan Hotel; about 80 yuan for a standard room, and 70 yuan for an ordinary room in the reserve's hostel; 5~10 yuan for a farmer's guest room.

Taiyuan
North Mt Wudang Scenic Area

Drunk Again in LIANGSHAN

Photos & article by Huang Yanhong

I had thought of visiting the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province but hesitated to go. Why?

My friends living there are highly hospitable. They would welcome me and see me off, spoil me and make me feel like a VIP, take turns to show me around, and talk all about themselves while drinking wine. Though not having a large capacity for liquor, I pretended to, and drank a lot to prove myself in their eyes. Therefore I was always drunk on every visit to Liangshan.

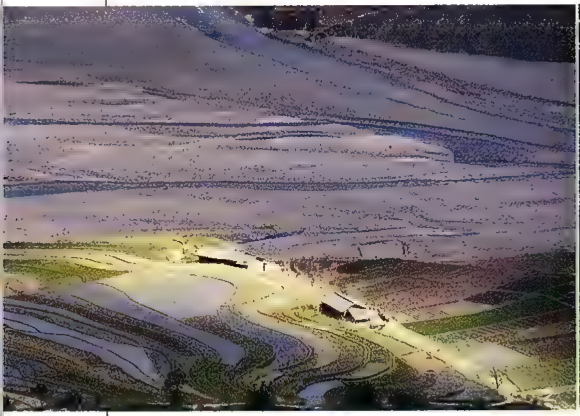
At one time I travelled to Liangshan nearly every year: to enjoy the Torch Festival, dance hand in hand with the Yi women, attend a local wedding in Puge County, or lead a group of photography buffs to the Huanglian Earth Forest, so beautiful we were reluctant to leave...

Flying Amid Clouds on Mount Luoji

The trip to Mt Luoji (Hair Bun) was most unforgettable.

Some time ago Mr. Lau, a close friend of mine, came to see me in Sichuan for a few days. I therefore took him to Liangshan and introduced him to my Liangshan friends. As a mutual friend I became a bridge between them, and wine naturally was an important medium in this friendship. Since we arrived in Liangshan, I had been half drunk all the time.

Lau asked to go to Mt Luoji. After detailed planning, we set off from Xichang, arriving within an hour at Baibaiding, the foot of the mountain.



We brought sufficient food, vegetables and personal belongings and hired a few helpers and horses. Life on the mountain was harder than we'd imagined. We had to sleep in a chilly, smelly cowshed. At night, it was so cold we couldn't sleep, so we just kept drinking wine and the fire burning, and chatted.

On the second day, as we started for the heights a fierce gale blew up. It was easy to walk with a favourable wind pushing us forward. Later when we headed into the wind, we had to walk with forward lunges as though practising martial arts. Our knees felt tired and painful, we could only move slowly. Fortunately, some friends helped us carry our belongings and the photography equipment. I was most impressed by the clouds. As we climbed to a terrace high above sea level, a thin cloud fleetly passed by our feet. We were like gods flying amid the clouds. Our only regret was they quickly blew away in the wind, and did not show up clearly in our photos.

Held in Custody by a Drunken Man

On the way down, we again faced something unexpected. In Baibaiding, a drunken Yi man claiming to be the village headman

1. **Clouds float across majestic Mt Luoji while a vast pastureland lies below.**
2. **The plains near Puge County in Liangshan Prefecture.**
3. **Baibaiding is a stop-over for tourists en route for Mt Luoji.**
4. **Cooking in the wild is an exciting experience.**

blocked our way. He demanded to see our "testimonials" and accused us of trespassing on the hill without his permission.

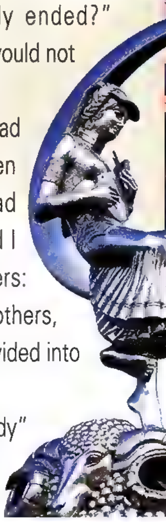
He said, with a strong smell of liquor on his breath, that it was time the Asian Games were held. I told him the event had actually ended two months ago. Shocked, he said: "Has it really ended?" Nevertheless, no matter what explanations we gave, he would not let us go.

Soon, our struggle attracted many passers-by who had no idea of what had happened. Worst of all, the drunken man's mother arrived on the scene. Thinking we had mistreated her son, she grabbed one of us. Mr. Lau and I had been the friendliest all along, so she told the villagers: "These two men are good guys." Then pointing to the others, she said, "and these are all bad guys." We were being divided into two groups and unable to proceed.

Finally, we two "good guys" stayed "under her custody" while the "bad guys" went to Xichang to get the "testimonials".

During our two hours as "hostages", Mr. Lau and I sat on the field ridge and talked with the locals. The old mother could speak a little Mandarin and was nice to us. She was still angry with the "bad guys", whom she thought were rude to the Yis.

The "saving the hostages plan" went smoothly. The "bad guys" brought along the "testimonials" and came with an official senior to the "village headman". Our "hostage career" ended and we promptly left Baibaiding. We learnt later that the man was indeed head of the village. He had over indulged that day — alcohol can really cause trouble.



Embarrassed at Taking a Train When Drunk

Back from Mt Luoji, we went to take pictures in the Huanglian Earth Forest accompanied by a Yi lady. My friend Old Han explained that as the Earth Forest was basically a muddy yellow, he invited a lady to "add more colour" and be our model. In following our instructions, she had to pose endlessly — go higher or lower, stand on the left, or look to the front... By evening she was exhausted.

道入正教
真理敬真神
CATHOLICA TEMPLUM
4

Her name was Wang Ying, she had a Yi mother and a Han Chinese father. He had been a Red Guard and passed through Liangshan during the Long March, then worked in Liangshan after the civil war. Wang Ying, involved in youth affairs, was competent and talkative.

Over dinner, Old Han suddenly suggested Wang and I swear to be brother and sister. Neither of us wanted to embarrass the other, so we just drank a cup of wine as an informal ceremony. Old Han also said he had to give a present to my "sister". After a long search he could only find a pen to give to Wang Ying.

On the day we left Xichang, my friends bade farewell to Mr. Lau and me. Drinking wine was a must. Every fresh cup of wine was accompanied by a new reason to drink it. Each reason sounded more plausible than the last, making refusal impossible. Eventually Old Han became seriously drunk and incoherent but ignoring our objections, still climbed on his motor-cycle and wanted to take us to the railway station.

Although also drunk, I kept a clear head and refused to go with him. A little later, while driving along in our jeep we saw Old Han's motor-cycle had run off the road. Luckily, he was not injured.

Mr. Lau and I were eventually lifted onto the train by our friends. It was the most embarrassing experience I have ever had.

Shocked by "Urban Neurosis"

Since the above adventure, I had not been to Liangshan for eight years. Time flows like a river, and I am not young any more. I drink much less because I am afraid of speaking inappropriate words and dislike the uncomfortable feeling of being drunk. Hence, the courage to go to Liangshan was lacking.

However, one day I missed Liangshan in the sunlight, and had to go immediately.

Old Han greeted me at the railway station. Not having seen each other for eight years, we were aware how time had marked our faces and turned our hair white. We felt somewhat sad.

He was still hospitable. He showed me a satellite base featuring a masterpiece of China's advanced technology, followed by a decent restaurant to savour local Yi cuisine while enjoying Yi ladies dancing. However, I noticed we were behaving far more formally. Perhaps my friends in Liangshan were still the same as before, and it was me who had changed unconsciously. Having lived in an urban environment for too long, I was used to being restrained, overcautious, liking to be complimented and to compliment others. I was always revealing something in my speech ... that terrible "urban neurosis"!

One day, we drifted in a boat on Qionghai Lake. Having grown accustomed to a comfortable air-conditioned environment, I was but wary of sunlight and ultraviolet rays. A straight-talking friend finally told me: We prefer the old Huang, he liked to have fun and spoke his mind. I was deeply affected but did not know what to do.

Tasting Delicious Hair Bun Soup

Next day, I suggested we go to Baibaiding, a place full of many funny memories for us. Wang Ying, bringing her daughter, also came with us. She had recently attended a tourism conference abroad. I was surprised to learn the young woman I had known eight years ago was now the president of the Liangshan Travel Bureau.

We turned off the highway leading to Puge onto a mountain trail. Though the road was still rough, I noticed signs of tourism development at the place, with villagers greeting us as we arrived. Leaving our luggage, we walked up to Mt Luoji. We were intoxicated by the greenery. Some women carrying firewood on their backs, walked out from the woods; a stream flowed to the right. Behind us villagers carried a large pot and all the utensils and ingredients (chiefly a piglet) needed for an al fresco meal.

We were again busily looking around for scenic views to shoot. Some tree roots were found in the shallow water. One of them boasted a shape resembling an old eagle. I tried to pull it closer to the shore. However, it was too big and in the end I took just one photo of it.

When the water in the pot was boiled, the villagers sliced the pork, adding part of it to the water and roasting the rest on the fire. We soon smelt the aroma of this ethnic Yi dish. When the meat was almost cooked, the villagers sprinkled it with salt and chilli powder, making it even more appetizing.

I suddenly remembered the fresh soup I tasted on the mountain last time I was here. Coincidentally, the villagers were going to make this soup again. After roasting dried chillis on the fire and crushing them into powder, they put it into a bowlful of spring water. By adding some salt, they peeled some powder from the skin of a small strange tree root. Then the characteristic "Hair Bun Soup" was made.

As I drank the soup, I talked with Wang Ying. As president of the tourism bureau, she was most concerned about the tourism industry in Liangshan. She asked me, a reporter, to promote this place. In fact, Liangshan is already well publicised with its colourful ethnic customs and abundance of beautiful scenery. There's the striking contrast between the basic farming life and the advanced satellite base, unique in the whole country.

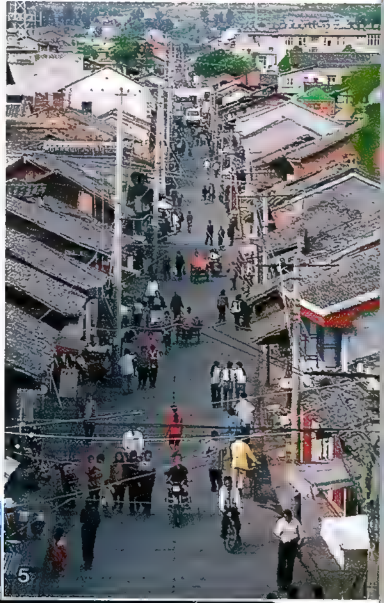
On the last day we drank wine again, but much less this time. Having grown older, we had changed, but we also laughed when talking about our crazy past.

Though we did not booze up, we talked a lot. I was pleased to see I had finally dropped my "mask". I am still me. I described this as "a return to my true self". They all applauded. Old Han excitedly cheered up, celebrating my "return".

I was drunk again, not on alcohol but on sincerity.

Translated by Kristy Wong

1. **Beside Qionghai Lake, people chat, sip tea, play cards...a carefree lifestyle.**
2. **The bronze statue of a Yi woman playing a "yueqin", a four-stringed plucked instrument.**
3. **An oldie savours the tranquility, peace and sunshine of an old street.**
4. **Many churches in Liangshan Prefecture date back more than 100 years.**
5. **Xichang is a time-honoured yet lively town.**
6. **Historical structures are plentiful in the ancient town of Dechang.**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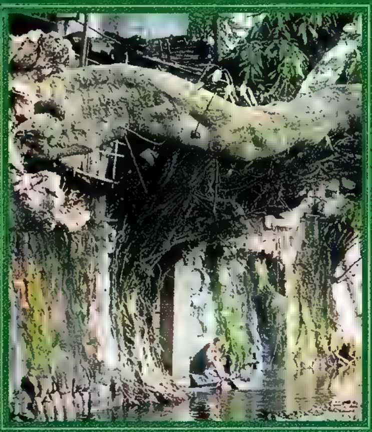
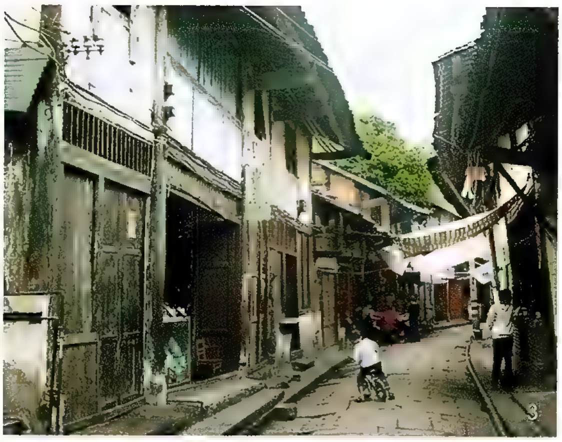
PIANYAN — An Old Town on Tree Roots

Photos & article by Pei Xuehong

Located in the mountains north of Chongqing in Sichuan Province. Pianyan is an old town built in the Ming Dynasty (1368 — 1644). Far from modern industries, people there still live in a quiet ancient way without the disturbance of many tourists. I could not find any gift shops that abound in many other old towns. The small bridge over the river and the kind of hundred-year old banyan trees by the side of the old street all exude a quiet elegance.



Tourists should stay overnight at Pianyan Town



Driving from Chongqing, we reached Pianyan almost at dusk. On the way, my companion Old Wang who came here a year ago kept talking about his unforgettable experience in the old town. Obviously he was deeply attracted by this ancient place.

The Pianyan Town is situated at the foot of mountains and beside a river. A small bluestone bridge goes across the river connecting the post road to the town. Looking at the town from a distance on the mountain rocks, we were quite impressed with this idyllic picture of a small bridge, a running stream and old cottages.

Pianyan is a small town,but it has a long history, the town was built in the Ming Dynasty and there were residents there even before that. In 1759 or the 24th year in the reign of Emperor Qianlong, it was formally constructed as a town and named Pianyan. The old town was once prosperous. Merchants thronged here and business was booming, making the small old town well-known in Sichuan and its neighbouring provinces.

Local people said that it is now much more convenient to come into and go out of the mountains, but many visitors here would go back on the same day. Maybe they meant that it was rather lonesome in the town at night. But I insist that tourists should stay overnight at Pianyan, otherwise they could only have an incomplete picture of Pianyan.

Looking from outside the town, I could see rows of houses built with wood and bricks well-spaced on the mountains where the town was seated. Embraced by the Heishuitan (Black water pool) River running down from the Huaying Mountain, the small town has a 400-metre main street and another lovely one-sided street of less than 200 metres long and over one metre wide. On one side of it there are old houses and on another side, lines of banyan trees growing on the raised bank.

The old venerated trees hold up half of the town

The banyan trees, commonly known as "Huangjueshu" (Ficus lacor Buch. Ham) in the Sichuan Basin (while they are called "Daqingshu" in other areas), are rather peculiar in the town: they do not grow much on the mountains, neither are they seen along the flagstone street. Instead, they all stand on the raised bank along the stream, taking roots deeply in the apertures between flagstones. Found at the back of over half of the street in the town, the ficus trees are mostly over 100 years old. These old trees are no longer simply shelters from the sun. They have held up half of the town, growing up together with the old houses and the riverbanks. The residential houses in Pianyan were all built with wood by the river, and every family has narrow stone steps leading to the stream along

1. Many families "luxuriantly" possess bluestone steps leading from their doorways to the river
2. Even the elderly folks in town could not tell for sure when the ficus trees were planted
3. The flagstone street is arched and it seldom retains the rainwater
4. Elderly folks at the town market.

1

these trees. There were many women washing clothes and vegetables by the green shallow stream. At both ends of the stream there are small stone bridges, with lush "Huangjue" trees standing by their sides. These flagstone bridges were built over a few hundred years ago.

The next day I walked to the main street. The old houses flanking the street still retain some of their former prosperities. Along this main street paved with large pieces of bluestones by the Heitan River, stores and shops come one after another. Built mostly with wood or bamboo, all of the shops have wooden structures and wood-block walls or walls made of bamboo fence and paste. With grey-tiled roof and white walls, these simple buildings look rustic, pure and fresh. Some of the small storied houses have shops on the ground floor with upper floors supported by wooden stakes over ground, a style commonly found in eastern Sichuan Province. Leaving more space to the street. The small overhead lane-spanning arcade between the main street and the one-sided street is most ingeniously built. Besides serving as a passageway, it has also enriched the perspective of the streets. Such practical designs with good taste can be found all over the town.

We could feel the mysterious but intense charm of folk customs of the Chongqing and Sichuan areas from the old cottages by the stream. Its architectural structure and decorations reveal so much of the cultural charm from the ancient civilization in Sichuan.

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Mysterious and intense charm of the ancient local customs

Our next day in Pianyan was a market day in the town. As the old town is so outlandish in the mountains with a still underdeveloped economy, villagers around the town still keep the ancient farming and living styles. Remote from the modern industries, they have to repair their farm tools at an ironsmith workshop and get their utensils from a carpenter's workshop or a bamboo article shop in the town. All things needed for a wedding or funeral are to be bought from special shops where things are produced on the spot. People handling the business of patching the pot and pan, repairing the bamboo matting, barbershop, the bean-curd shop and small restaurants mostly have their customers on the market day. The business people have to follow the principle of making small profits in dealing with the customers who are all mountain villagers.

Old Wang led us to Mr. Chen's ironsmith workshop first. He came here last year and made friends with him. The fire on the stove kept burning, and Mr. Chen was busy trying to get a few farm tools repaired before his customers came. He told us that his wife and his only hope was to provide for their daughter to study in college by forging iron.

The paper shop under the small overhead lane-spanning arcade was opened by Mr. Tang. His shop has two fronts so he also opened a teahouse, managed by him and his wife. He was making paper

money used as offering for the dead when we came to his house. Talking about his business, he said that it was okay but what was more profitable was not the paper shop handed down to him from his grandma, but the newly opened teahouse. A game played by three people was quite popular in the town, which had brought many customers to his teahouse.

It was towards noon when we got to a stand for patching pots and pans of the Old Gu. There were many such stands in the market, but Old Gu had the most customers. for he had the best skills in the market, especially for big pots that were hard to patch. None of the big iron pot in the restaurants in the town had not been patched by him. Out of curiosity, I asked him why he did not take any apprentices as he was well over 50s, he said helplessly, "Even my children don't like it. Who else would like to take up this trade?"

People in this old town are mostly the elderly, women and children. Most of young people went to find work opportunities outside the mountains, as this mountainous region has offered limited space for their development. Looking at the greyish white stained walls in the old town, I could not help feeling that the Pianyan Town is really getting old.

Walking out of the old main street, I came to the bluestone bridge at the entrance to the town. Some tourists came for a visit on their way to other tourist sites, but not in large number. Maybe because Pianyan is still not so well-known yet, it is free of the gift shops selling souvenirs which abound in other old towns. People in this town still follow the typical old folkways and morals of the Sichuan area. It may lack something specifically outstanding, but it has loyally kept its life style and features totally different from those popular in modern cities. Every bit of it exudes a tranquil elegance pleasant to all.

Translated by Yu Ling

- **Transportation** If you end your trip to the Three Gorges in Chongqing, it is very convenient to take a day or two to visit the old Pianyan Town. Here are some recommended travel routes:
  1. There are buses for sight seeing everyday passing Pianyan from the bus station of Chaotianmen in central Chongqing, starting from 9 to 10 a.m.
  2. Take the Jindaoxia special-line tourist bus to Pianyan at the north bus station in Chongqing. The drive takes about two hours.
  3. Take bus No. 501 or 502 from Chongqing's downtown area to Beibai District, then change to a mini bus to Pianyan which sets out every hour.
- **Accommodations** There are no star-level hotels in Pianyan, but it is better to stay there for a night to taste its special flavour in the morning. Some hostels in the town might not have reached the hygiene standard. You can hand in 30 yuan and ask for new beddings and a local styled breakfast. Or you may choose to stay for the night at Beibei District. A standard hotel room may charge for 120 to 180 yuan a day.
- **Dining** The town serves typical Sichuan cuisine with local flavours. The small restaurants may seem a little outmoded, but if you require, the owner will make the tableware clean carefully. Dishes like Bean-curd Cooked with Lotus Leaves, Chicken Braised in Spring Water, Meat Steamed with Seasoned Sticky Rice and Preserved Ham are all worth a try. With 10 to 20 yuan you can give yourself a nice treat.

1. Most farmers come to the village via this one-sided street
2. Every Sunday afternoon, most of the young people will return to work in cities, leaving the elderly and children in the town
3. This paper shop has been there for two generations. The family can live on a turnout of a few thousand pieces of paper for about 30 yuan a day
4. The flood land by the river means water has receded in the last few years. It is not in the low water period yet

BICYCLING THROUGH TIBET ALONE

Photos & article by Liu Su

It seemed a crazy idea — to travel in Tibet alone by bike! But I'm a person who likes challenges. On May 24, 2002, I prepared my bicycle and packed up the necessities — clothes, a tent, sleeping bag and first-aid kit — and set off. I chose to go by bike because it allowed me to travel at a slower pace. Not only my body but also my heart could enjoy everything and gain a deeper impression of the journey. On my itinerary were Dali, Lijiang, Zhongdian and Dêqên in Yunnan Province. After passing Yanjing and Markam on the Yunnan-Tibet Highway, I would take the Sichuan-Tibet Highway and travel via Qushui, Xigazê, Lhasa and Tingri to reach my destination — the Campsite on Mt Qomolangma.

Starting the Journey from Kunming

One does not need to worry about food and lodging on the section leaving Kunming. At Tiger Leaping Gorge, I lingered for a long time. Several years have passed since the heroes rafting on the Yangtse River passed here, but I was still inspired by their daring spirits that challenged natural obstacles and themselves, and represented the hopes of the nation.

It takes several hours to bike from Tiger Leaping Gorge to Lesser Zhongdian. By halfway I was tired and it was getting dark. I asked a Yi family to let me stay for the night. They were very hospitable and treated me to butter tea, and brought out all their bedding to make a comfortable bed for me. It had been a long time since I had met people with such sincerity and kindness.

I spent two days visiting scenic spots around Zhongdian before heading for Dêqên. At Benzilan, I encountered Akikazu Rei, a young Japanese man also on a bicycle, whom I had met briefly in Chuxiong. We stayed in the same inn and Akikazu Rei bought beer to celebrate our reunion. As we could not speak each other's language, we tried to communicate through writing. The words he wrote shocked me: "You are insane." I had to admit he was right. What other words could describe people like us travelling by bike? We laughed.

The next day, he left before me to go to Dêqên to wait for a friend.

Crossing Baimang Snow Mountain

To go from Benzilan to Dêqên, I had to cross Baimang Snow Mountain. Benzilan is over 1,000 metres above sea level and the saddle of Baimang is over 4,000 metres. I had

1. To see Peak Qomolangma clearly is the chance of a lifetime
2. This is all my entire equipment

to travel uphill for 50 km. If I could pass this section without suffering altitude sickness, it meant my physical condition would be alright for entering Tibet.

I planned to take two days crossing Baimang. I felt extremely tired, more so than at any time since I had set off. Exhausted, I camped for the night not far from the top. Next morning, I found the scenery around me extraordinarily wonderful. On the ranges were giant western Yunnan pines; the vast wilderness was a riot of blooming azaleas.

When I arrived in Dêqên, the Taizi (Prince) Snow Mountain shone in the morning sun, as brilliant as gold. At a small inn I unexpectedly met Akikazu Rei again. He was with his friend, Matsui Seiko, a student from Tokyo studying Chinese at the Yunnan University. Also crazy about travelling by bike, she spoke fluent Chinese. She and Akikazu got to know each other in Zhongdian and decided to go to Tibet together. In the evening we drank beer. With Matsui as interpreter, it was much easier for Akikazu and me to communicate. I asked him why he had chosen to travel by bicycle. He did not answer, instead turning the question back on me. I thought for a while and said: "It's a kind of spiritual quest and for my love of nature." He then gave his answer: "I do it for fun. Travelling by bicycle makes me happy." He was right. What could be a better reason than making yourself happy?

Roaring at Hongla Mountain Pass

I left for the Mingyong Glacier on the following day while they stayed behind. The route from Dêqên to Yanjing in Tibet was full of danger. I was too exhausted to feel much fear. I pressed on and it was not until I reached Yanjing that I felt relief. Thanks to God that this dangerous section was finally over.

Yanjing means Salt Well, so named because of its salt production. The Hongla Mountain Pass ahead of me is 4,300 metres above sea level and difficult to cross carrying a load of 30 kg. But everything in my luggage was useful. When riding up long hills at such high altitude, I used the lowest gear. If the road was too steep, I had to dismount and push. A curious Tibetan boy on the mountain followed me all the way. Eventually he just had to help me, pushing my bike and offering me cigarettes. It was a pity that I could not understand a word he said. When I said good-bye, I gave him a mini torch as a gift. He stood still on the top of the slope, seeing me off. At the pass, prayer streamers fluttered in the wind. I was so overwhelmed by the scene that I wanted to roar with happiness.

A Hard-working Traveller

After entering Tibet, it was often difficult to find food and lodging. Sometimes I stayed with road workers or at a villager's home. When I could not get either, I had to camp in the wilderness. It rained a lot. At worst all I could do was sit and wait for daybreak. For food, I considered myself lucky to find compressed cookies and instant noodles in small shops. When there was no other choice, I even had to beg.

Here I have to mention Yao Zhengfu, a hard-working traveller from Hunan Province. Yao left for Tibet from Jinghong in Yunnan on an ordinary bicycle with only five kg of luggage. He had no sleeping bag, pump, medicine or many of the other items I believed necessary. Even further beyond my imagination was his budget allowing him only five yuan per day. We spent two days travelling together. One night we stayed with road workers who offered us an empty room. Yao laid a piece of board on the ground and slept on it with his raincoat on. The Tibetan night was bitterly cold. Deep in the night, I heard him groaning from the cold. The sound made me shiver in my sleeping bag and I almost cried. We separated at Zogang. To tell the truth, travelling with him was too hard for me. Even today I still feel ashamed whenever I think about it.

Warm-hearted Tibetans

At Zogang, I met up with Akikazu and Matsui. We had lunch together and at dusk went to stay at the road workers' dorm. The workers warmly invited us to have supper with them. They treated us with great hospitality and would not leave us alone until they saw each of us slip into a sleeping bag.

Tibetans were friendly. Whenever you

met them, they greeted you and invited you to try their butter tea and "zanba" (a Tibetan snack made of baked Qingke flour). Unfortunately, I did not like the strange flavours of their food.

On our ride towards Bamda, I saw many beautiful wild flowers blossoming on the roadside. I picked a bunch and presented it to Matsui. A Tibetan quickly came up to me and told me the flower was poisonous. People might lose their senses by smelling it. I hastily took the flowers back and threw them away, embarrassed.

Catching Cold on the Highlands

I left the two Japanese after we got to Bamda. I had to go to Qamdo to withdraw some money from my bank account. Unfortunately, I only withdrew a small amount of 300 yuan, which later caused me hardship.

I caught a cold riding back to the main route. Nobody can afford to catch cold in the highlands as it is dangerous and may cost your life. My sickness forced me to stay in Bamda for four more days. I doubled the dose of cold cure. And with help and medication from the Chinese Women's Qomolangma Exploration Team, I recovered and was on my way again.

My Days of Begging

I have never had any experience of begging. By now, the little money I had withdrawn at Qamdo was almost spent. I arrived at the county town of Bomi on Friday afternoon, but the post office was already closed for the weekend. On Monday I was told that my bankcard did not work because of some systems problem. It threw me into a dark abyss — I only had enough money left for a meal.

The next stop where I could get money was Bayi, 300 km away. How could I get there on a budget of only 10 yuan? Nevertheless, I was determined to ride through to Lhasa, even if I had to beg on the way. With my last 10 yuan, I bought a dozen buns, salted vegetables and 0.5 kilogram of sugar. By the end of the first day, I had consumed quite a lot of the buns since I had no other source for the required calories. At Tongmai, I had to forgo dignity and beg for food. I went into an army barracks and asked a soldier: "Will you please give me something to eat?" The officers and soldiers treated me generously, offered me food and wine, and let me stay the night. The next day I took pictures with them and said farewell. Before I left they gave me some buns. In this way I travelled on, staying in military barracks or sharing meals with road workers.

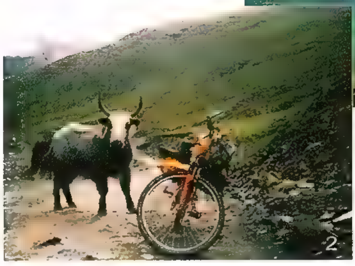
Hallucinating On The Way

Of all the Sichuan-Tibet Highway, the Tongmai section is the most difficult. Several dozen kilometres belong in the category of "slippery slope", where landslides often cause fatalities. I saw with my own eyes a huge rock crash down onto the road, creating a dust cloud before falling into the river. It was scary to watch the spray it sent up. However, more

1. The grassland of Zhongdian in Yunnan in May
2. Too cold and damp to sleep, I had to sit and wait for daybreak
3. One must pass the dangerous mountain roads on a land trip to Tibet
4. Biking along Lancang River, and you can experince the magnificence of the Hengduan Mountains

often than not the roughest terrain offers the most magnificent scenery. After Tongmai, I was going to cross Seqila Mountain. I allowed two days for the 80-km climb, the highest on the Sichuan-Tibet Highway.

Very tired, I plodded uphill. I began hallucinating and thought the stones were people. I forgot who I was and what I was doing. At twilight I saw the sutra banners fluttering on the top of the ridge. By now I had only one piece of compressed bread in my pocket. From the high point of the saddle, I admired the 7,782-metre Namjagbarwa Peak opposite. Bathed in the evening glow, it looked so beautiful and sacred. Before I knew it, tears rolled down my cheeks.



A World of Crazy Men

Once at Bayi town, my days of begging ended. I had a good meal and bought food and fruit before setting off on the road to Lhasa. The road became smoother. The only obstacle ahead was the 5,080-metre Mila Mountain. It was easy riding on the tar-coated road and I had no trouble reaching the top of Mila. There I met Zhang Jian, a man riding a motorcycle and holding a banner supporting Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games. He had come from Zhaoqing in Guangdong Province. He took off his helmet and greeted me, saying: "Tibet is really a world of crazy men." While we chatted, a hailstorm hit us. We hurried on our ways after taking a photo together.

I saw the golden roofs of the Potala the following afternoon. It took me 46 days to ride from Kunming to Lhasa. There I met Yao Zhengfu, Akikazu and Matsui. We took a group picture at the Lhasa Square for each to keep as a memento.

The Attractive Lake Yamzho Yumco

I took a two-day break in Lhasa before riding upstream along the Yarlung Zangbo River. The highway was smooth, without steep hills. But when I went to visit Lake Yamzho Yumco off the road from Quzhui, I spent a whole day on a tough ride climbing over the 4,800-metre Mt Gambala. Yamzho Yumco lay quietly in a fetching shade of jade, the most charming lake I had ever seen.

At Xigazê, Tibet's second largest city, I visited Tashilunpo Temple ,the next day, I left Xigazê for Lhasa.

All along the road, I saw barren wilderness without even a single tree and wondered how the local Tibetans live in such a terrible environment.

Meeting Akikazu Again

While wandering in the county town of Lhasa, I saw Akikazu biking towards the town from the direction of Lhasa. He told me Matsui had sold her bike in Lhasa and flown back to Kunming. He had only two more days left on his visa to China so had to leave for Nepal. Lhasa was 300 km from Zham, the entry port between China and Nepal, and there were two climbs on the road. I suggested that he take a bus but he insisted on riding his bicycle, saying that he would continue riding at night. (He

visited India and Pakistan, following his smooth journey to Nepal)

Robbed by a Yak

On the way from Lhasa to Tingri, I had to climb over Mt Gacuola, 5,220 metres above sea level. Here luck deserted me. The route was rugged and steep and then a fierce yak attacked me. Though the air was thin, the yak charged vigorously, its horns aiming at me like a Spanish fighting bull. Scared to death, I abandoned my bicycle and hid. However it was the bike, not me, that the huge animal was interested in. When the animal found the machine could not fight back, it began to rob it. Using its long tongue, the yak probed my basket, licking out the unpacked chocolate. Eyeing its knife-like horns, I dared do nothing but watch it enjoying my favourite snack. Finally, I could not stand it any more, I threw a stone at it and it retreated.

Before I reached the saddle, I was gasping heavily. I felt on the edge of death. At this moment, a woman and her daughter who were herding on the mountain approached me. Noticing my exhaustion, they helped me push my bike. Though we could not communicate in language, their kindness moved me and warmed me up in a very cold situation. When I turned round after walking on some distance, I saw them still standing there waving to me. Once more my eyes filled with tears.

Reaching the Qomolangma Campsite

I stayed a day in the county town of Tingri and took a good rest, thanks to the conscientious care of the border guards stationed there. Then I was on the road again — towards the last high target in this journey, Mt Langmola. Many people passed me driving towards Qomolangma. They all cheered me and a foreign woman clapped her hands loudly. I was excited. Their encouragement made me realize the significance of my existence.

I reached Qomolangma Campsite in the afternoon. After 57 days of hardship and happiness, I had reached my destination. Here the sky seemed close to the earth. Staring at the snow-capped peak of Qomolangma, I absorbed its sacred spirit.

The camp was empty. All mountaineers had withdrawn because summer is not a good season for climbers. A lonely yellow dog dutifully guarded the site.

I admired Mt Qomolangma in silence. The exposed body of the "Third Goddess" shone in the sun, and the reflections from the glaciers made it hard to open my eyes. I took one picture after another to my heart's content. As I was leaving, a cluster of clouds flew in from afar to veil the mountain. Now I realized how lucky I was. It was rare good fortune to see the entire peak of Qomolangma.

Tibet is a paradise for brave people. Everybody who has a dream would long to visit it. My journey helped me find my goal in life — to love nature.

Sometimes, I ask myself: "What's the purpose of travel?" My answer is you don't need a purpose. Whenever you like, you just set off on your road.

Translated by G. Shang

1. **The beautiful Lake Yamzho Yumco**
2. **This yak appeared at Mount Gacuola has robbed my chocolate**
3. **Two Tibetan women offered to push my bike when I was tired out on a high altitude road**
4. **One could not stop shedding tears when viewing Peak Namjagbarwa**
5. **The camp was empty in the summer slack season, only a lonely yellow dog was left guarding the campsite**
6. **It took me 46 days to bike from Kunming to Tibet, a trip full of unforgettable experiences**

AN EVENING AT THE LITTLE HOUSE OF TRUE FEELINGS

Photos & article by Zhu Jie

It was raining at 9 p.m. in Guangzhou. Through the taxi window, I could see the city enshrouded in the misty colours of neon lights. When the taxi turned from the busy main street into quiet Fazheng Road, the rain abated. The kapok-shaped street lights cast their soft rays creating an enchanting atmosphere.

The taxi stopped at No. 59. I had thought it might be hard to find a house by its number. But the unconventional design of the house with dim lights behind dark brown latticed windows caught my eye immediately. One could hardly miss it.

With the economic boom in Guangzhou in recent years, coffee houses that symbolize a refined lifestyle have sprung up like bamboo shoots after spring rain. But there are not many that truly have style and a distinct character. However my colleagues had insisted a cafe called Suxin Xiaozhu (Little House of True feelings) was different. Out of curiosity, I decided to come and see for myself.

New Flavour in an Old House

Pushing open the door, I found the place elegantly decorated in the classical style with solid wood painted in dark brown. A staircase at the door led to a new mezzanine floor. It not only added extra space, but also was visually appealing because of the different heights. A few rattan glass-topped tables were set around. There were just the right number of customers to create a warm atmosphere.

I sat down on an elegant rattan chair, skipped over such popular flavours as Blue Mountain and Cappuccino on the menu and ordered a cup of Suxin (true feelings) coffee (Pic.5) specially prepared by the house. A waitress told me this coffee was for people who were not used to the beverage and was more flavoursome than ordinary coffee. She brought a clean white porcelain cup filled with light brown liquid that emitted an enticing aroma. I took a sip and found it smooth with no bitterness. For a man like myself who rarely drank coffee, it was a good choice. The cafe also offered a large number of delicacies, including Suxin noodles (Pic.4). One dipped the pure white noodles in an amber-coloured sauce seasoned with green spring onion. It was tasty and refreshing. I also ordered Japanese-style noodles served in light-coloured miso soup and some egg-coated French toast.

A Taste of Japanese Style

Both the food and decor hinted at Japanese. I was told the young proprietress, Zhang Lei, had studied in Japan for many years. To earn her tuition fees, she had worked in comfortable and cultivated Japanese coffee houses and became fascinated by their leisurely

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lifestyle and atmosphere of equality. She decided to create a small world of her own when she returned to China. It took her two years to find a suitable site. Finally, she chose this old house of the Shenzhen Party Committee located on a beautiful street far from the noisy market places.

Suxin Xiaozhu is keyed to "Cafe & Art". An artistic atmosphere pervaded. On display along the walls were art objects (Pics.1,2) collected by the proprietress from various parts of the world, including fine Japanese tableware and tea sets, a Spanish sword, antique typewriter (Pic.6), radio and electric fan, statuette of David and sculptured busts. Some objects were for sale. An old piano with its soft lustre and a picture of two ballerinas dancing on tiptoe appealed to me most and caught my imagination.

There was also a bookcase (Pic.3) filled with books, magazines and photographic publications for customers to leaf through. I found a book of photographs by the well-known photographer Ji Niu. On its cover was a picture of the photographer himself blowing a smoke ring, revealing his carefree style.

Revealing True Feelings

The proprietress named her cafe with a specific aim. The beautifully printed menu explained that Suxin meant "true feelings". She hoped her place would let people lay aside their everyday worries and reveal their real selves. Her aim was not in vain. In the thick visitors' books accumulated in the three years since the cafe opened, one could see honest feelings revealed in different handwriting. Each entry seemed to tell a story. The stranger who read them for the first time was overcome by both joy and sorrow and felt an upsurge of emotion. The passages recorded sweet promises made by a newly married couple; the excitement of someone just admitted to the Xinghai Music Academy; a love story that began and ended in the coffee house; a broken marriage which forced a man to look after his child while going out to work; the accusation of an angry young man whose father was framed and imprisoned.... In fact, the success or failure of a cafe is not determined initially by its coffee and food. Rather it depends on whether it can create a warm and comfortable environment where customers can reveal their inner selves. In this, Suxin Xiaozhu is very successful.

As the night advanced, the door opened more frequently. The sound of popular songs in English mixed with the aroma of coffee. How many people would express their feelings tonight?

Translated by Tang Bowen

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情绪管理全书
餐饮管理
苏菲的世界
张爱玲文集
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Address: 59 Fazheng Road, Guangzhou
Telephone: (20) 8354 0875.
Business hours: 11 a.m.~1 a.m.

Recommended Delicacies:

Japanese noodles: 35 yuan, Suxin noodles: 30 yuan, Fresh toast: 25 yuan, Suxin coffee: 25 yuan, English orange tea: 30 yuan.

Remington Portable
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IN SEARCH OF AN 8,000-YEAR-OLD PREHISTORIC SITE

Photos & article by Chang Qingmin

Dadiwan is a famous archaeological site dating back to prehistoric times in the southeast of Gansu Province. Acclaimed as the "earliest spark of civilization in China", it is more highly valued than the well-known Banpo Site in Xi'an.

A China 8,000 Years Ago

One can find Chinese history and culture, it's said, dating back 2,000 years in Beijing, 5,000 years in Xi'an and 8,000 years in Qin'an where Dadiwan (Big Land Bay) is sited. It is 600-plus km from Lanzhou to the Dadiwan site at Shaodian Village in Wuying Town, Qin'an. The site covers an area of 110 square metres on gentle slopes south of the Hulu River.

Research institute head Cheng Xiaozhong told us that, after years of excavation, more than 250 residential sites, 40 kiln sites, 79 tombs, 340 pits, eight entrenchments and nearly 10,000 Neolithic relics had been found there, the oldest dating back 7,800 years. These relics became alive in his description. Here are the earliest sculptural work, painting, cement, the most ancient symbol of recording, palace building, inkstone, measuring vessel and so on.

At Dadiwan, site No. 901 is regarded by archaeologists as an embryonic form of Chinese palace, perhaps the Great Hall of the People of a primitive society. It consists of a main hall, east and west wings, a back hall and an annex to the gate. The main hall is rectangular, 16 metres by eight metres, and the living area is 131 square metres. There are three doors at the front, eight pillars and nine rooms. The floor of the hall is very smooth and looks as if it were made from modern cement. A blow from an iron bar makes the same sound as that made striking a modern concrete floor. This large structure was not an ordinary primitive house, but a place for the communal activities of a clan or tribe. It is evidence that architecture appeared even in primitive society, and was the pioneer of palace building in China. There are many examples of fine old buildings like this in Dadiwan that date from the earliest civilization in the world. Both archaeologists and tourists will appreciate Dadiwan.

Carrier of the Yangshao Culture

A farmer named Kou Qinhou lives in Dadiwan. Both diligent and amiable, he is a local celebrity for his pottery-making skills, handed down from his ancestors. Operating a small and profitable welding shop in the town, he also sells his coloured pottery there. The two seem to have nothing to do with each other, but his shop is the liveliest in town.

I sat on Mr. Kou's heated earthen bed eating the noodles his wife had cooked, while he told me a story. More than 10 years ago, an archaeological team came to his village. They excavated the ancient site, unearthing much pottery. Kou was puzzled as to why these city types took so much trouble digging up broken pottery. So he told an archaeologist: "It's too much trouble doing all this. Why not come to my house and let my father make some new ones for you. They are sure to be both clean and beautiful." The archaeologist laughed, thinking Kou was joking. But when the offer was repeated, the archeologist decided to go for a look.

"When he came to my home, the archaeologist was stunned. After looking carefully at the pottery my father made, he held my father's hand and said: 'I just can't believe that in such a remote poor mountain area there is a carrier of the Yangshao Culture. The pottery is so finely made and typical of the culture. You are old Dadiwan still alive.' Before he left, my father gave him some pottery as souvenirs."

"Treasures" Are Everywhere

I did not have the chance, nor was qualified, to join the large-scale archeological excavation in Dadiwan, so I could only read about it. Appreciating this, Kou told me: "Though the excavation was done many years ago, it is still easy to pick up old pottery fragments. My nephew Mingming will take you to do some 'archaeological digging' tomorrow." I was so excited I could hardly sleep that night. The next day I followed Mingming to look for "treasures". Mingming casually picked up a long pointed stone that looked like a stone axe, poked lightly through the soil, and soon we saw some pottery fragments in the yellow earth. Under the little boy's instruction, I gradually became an expert. There are pottery fragments buried in the soil, on the ridges of fields, in ditches, by the roadside, and even on the earthen house walls. Mingming told me that after rain a lot of pottery fragments are washed out from the soil. In two hours we got over 20 pieces. Returning to my room, I drew some water from a well, washed the dirt from the shards and their real surfaces appeared. Although the fragments can't be compared with complete pots, I could still see in them the fine civilization of our ancestors over 6,000 years ago.

Dadiwan Today

The past 7,000~8,000 years are but an instant in the universe's evolution. Life here is as natural as in our ancestors' day. People rise with the sun and retire when it sets. Every family has a big house built with bricks, bright and spacious, with a big courtyard in front. The whole family sits under apple trees, drinks tea and chats together. After living in the city all year, I find life there very admirable.

My trip to Dadiwan was not merely a visit to a prehistoric site. It helped me understand how the ancestors of the Chinese nation moved from caves to houses and how they changed from living upon wild fruits and animals to cultivating the land and crossed the threshold of civilization.

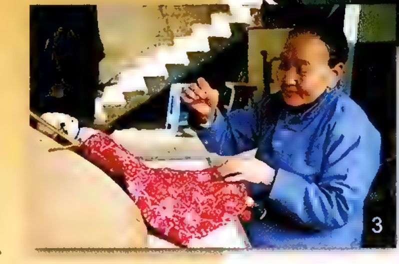
Translated by Yu Ling

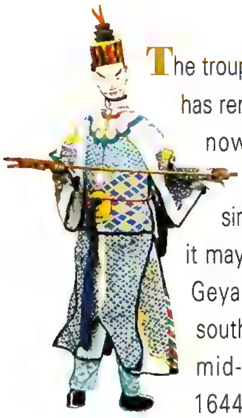
1. A prehistoric home in Dadiwan
2. Mr. Kou and his mixed shop
3. Living conditions in Dadiwan have been greatly improved today
4. People lived in a thatched hut like this in Dadiwan about 8,000 years ago
5. Site No. 901 — the earliest form of palace building in China
6. Children enjoy playing ping-pong on the ground

DAQIANG PUPPETS

Photos & article by Wang Shiliang

The Chinese String Puppet Show is a folk art with unique Chinese characteristics. The string puppets in Taqian Town, in Yanping District of Nanping City, Fujian Province, enjoy a long and rich history. It is said that in the late Qing Dynasty there were more than 30 puppet troupes performing for the people in every village of the district. Currently, there are still two troupes that perform, the Pengxia Troupe and the Hushan Troupe.

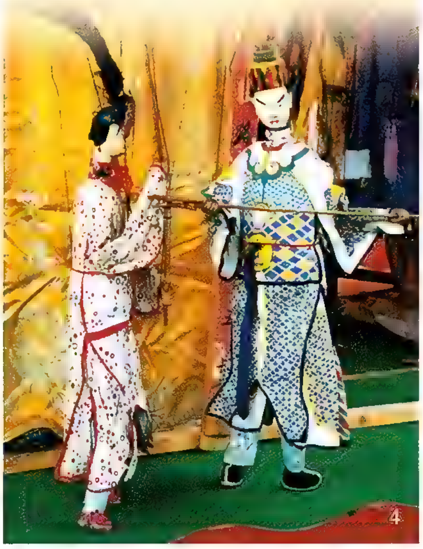




The troupes use a style of opera that has remnants of the Geyang style, now known as the Daqiang opera. From its stories, singing style and performance, it may have originated when the Geyang style arrived from the south of Jiangxi Province in the mid-Ming Dynasty (1368 — 1644). As the Daqiang opera developed it absorbed influences from Zhejiang impromptu music and folk songs. The Daqiang opera and string puppets were both highly popular in the Taqian region during the Qing Dynasty. After the Xinhai Revolution, it spread rapidly and soon there were more than 30 family-based troupes.

There are four main categories of roles in Daqiang opera: "sheng" (male roles), "dan" (female roles), "jing" (painted face roles), and "chou" (clowns). Sung loudly at first, each line then ends with a rising tone and a soft voice. The singer starts the first three or five words of every line, then is joined by the backstage singers. Dialogue uses a combination of loud and soft voices. The singing and dialogue are in local dialect.

The Daqiang opera string puppet show uses traditional, simple and high-pitched music and mixes loud and soft voices. A rare style passed down from ancient opera, it combines with the scintillating puppet performance to bring stories vividly to life. The relatively simple singing required for Daqiang opera is set to music, and artists pass the songs down to the next generation by demonstrating them. Because the melodies are straightforward without a great deal of tonal variations, sometimes they sound like dialogue. Accompaniment instruments include drums, clappers, large gongs and small gongs, and large and small cymbals. Stories mostly originate from those of the Geyang opera.



The Pengxia Troupe is really a family affair. The performer is 71-year-old Pengxia villager Wei Guanglong. His father died when he was three and he started learning puppetry from his stepfather when he was thirteen. He has been performing for nearly sixty years and has played innumerable shows. His son Yuan Qinghong now plays the accompaniment music backstage. When there is a break in their farming life, especially during festivals and celebrations, father and son perform at various villages. The two-man show is quite unusual, especially compared with the Puppet Show Troupe of Hushan, with two or three performers and three to five backstage musicians. The format of the shows does not vary greatly. Most of the string puppets are hand-made, with an occasional one being bought from around the Quanzhou area. The ornate and pretty puppet costumes, hats and shoes, are all hand sewn by Wei's wife, Zhu Xiamei.

Although the Daqiang Puppet Shows of Taqian Town are fascinating to watch and true to life, their audiences are mainly older people. Because young people neither want to watch the shows nor learn the art, its future is in doubt. But ideally this ancient traditional folk art will be passed on for generations to come.

1. **Strings are mainly used to control the puppets' poses and movements**
2. **While Wei Guanglong performs on-stage, his son plays the accompaniment music backstage**
3. **The wife of Wei Guanglong, Zhu Xiamei sews costumes for the puppets**
4. **Puppet show *The Sunflower Story***

OCTOBER

20/10~10/11

With support from 11 state departments and groups, the **West Lake Expo 2002** to be held in Zhejiang Province, showcases 19 exhibitions featuring stamps, fashion, tea, vehicles, and numerous trade and investment seminars. A total of 15 high-level forums, a grand opening ceremony, fireworks, the Silk Fashion Festival, Zhejiang Cultural Relics Show, and a marathon will be hosted simultaneously.

October

One of the Five Sacred Mountains in China, Mt Huangshan (Yellow Mountain) in Anhui Province is renowned for its splendid peaks and rare pine trees. During the **Mt Huangshan International Tourist Festival**, a traditional lantern festival, folk performances, tours of Mt Huangshan and ancient Huizhou architecture, investment seminars and travel exhibitions are arranged.

21, 28/9 & 1/10

The **14th Macao International Fireworks Display Contest** has invited teams from many different countries and regions, including Australia, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Germany, Japan, France, Portugal and China's mainland and Taiwan, to compete with spectacular firework displays in front of the Macao Tower. The fireworks shows will run from nine to 10 o'clock every night, making the event the largest of its kind in the world.

30/9~7/10

Jointly sponsored by the China Federation of Culture, China Air Sports Association and Qingdao Municipality, the **2002 Qingdao China International Fire Balloon Festival** will be held in the Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Zone. It consists of three parts, a hot air balloon invitation tournament, a grand air show and an international cultural & arts week. Flyers, folk artists and businessmen from some 30 countries will gather for the event.

21/9~3/11

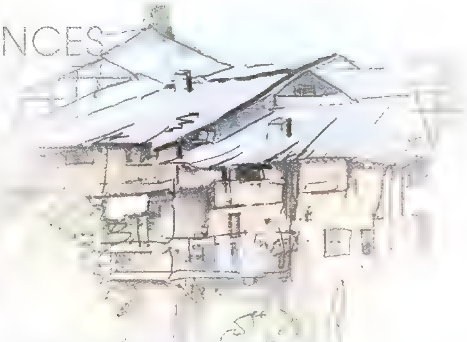
More than 100,000 kites, created by teams from Japan, Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Taiwan as well as mainland China, will be on show during the **2002 Dongguan International Kite Tourism Festival** in Dongguan, Guangdong Province. Dongguan is a prosperous area near the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, and home to such famous sites as the Opium War Museum, Sea War Museum and Keyuan Garden.

26/9~10/10

The yearly **Qufu National Confucius Cultural Festival** is held to commemorate the birth of Kongzi, or Confucius (551 — 479 B.C.), the famous philosopher-educator and founder of Confucianism in ancient China. He was born on the 27th day of the eighth month in 551 B.C. in Qufu, Shandong Province. Activities include grand ceremonies, calligraphy exhibitions, visits to Konglin — the graveyard of Confucius and his descendants, wedding ceremonies and Shandong cuisine.

Mid-October

Held in the "hometown of porcelain" in Jiangxi Province, the **Jingdezhen International Pottery and Porcelain Festival** showcases pottery exhibitions and porcelain-making techniques, tea-making, international academic exchanges on pottery and porcelain and trade seminars. Tourists may participate in tours of porcelain-making techniques from the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368 — 1911), historic pottery and porcelain sites, and the study of pottery and porcelain.



EXPERIENCES IN TRAVELS

Missing the Elders in Small Villages

It was winter vacation right after New Year's Day of 1992. Together with eight fellow travellers, I set off on foot from the northern part of Lantau Island planning to camp in Hau Hok Wan. There in a small eatery, a simple wooden hut to be exact, we picked up a menu and ordered some pan-stirred rice noodles. The price was indeed very low. Soon large plates of rice noodles were brought to the table. We were assaulted by its sweet aroma and it was really delicious. The warm elderly couple who ran the eatery had been fishermen in the past. Their children had all grown and left, leaving them running this little restaurant for tourists. Life was, however, quiet and they were happy with it.

There were not so many tourists on Po Toi Island in those days. Many houses near the dock had been deserted. An elderly woman seeing a ferryboat approaching hurriedly lit a fire to prepare the Ng Fa Cha, a Chinese herbal tea, that was then poured into fancy plastic bottles. Fragrant and sweet, the tea quenched my thirst. Compared with the price in town, it cost nothing. I must say the tea here was pure and healthy, with sufficient ingredients.

Ping Chau was a tranquil island. There were more policemen than residents. People had to collect rain for water there and arable land was scarce. Life was hard naturally. However, on the island once I had a bowl of unforgettably delicious dried fish and peanut congee made by an elderly couple at a reasonable price.

Now, many old villages in the New Territories had been deserted. Only a few elders insisted on staying. However, whenever tourists came they would provide good food or local produce. At a time when we must be vigilant and guard against being cheated or falling into a trap, I cannot help sometimes think of those elderly people and their wonderful cooking.

Lai Siu Kei, Hong Kong

* * *

On an Indian Train

Railways run everywhere in India carrying 11 million people every day. All railway stations in cities, large and small, are always crowded.

In India, trains are often delayed. A short delay could be between half an hour to more than two hours, but a long delay could be from seven to even 10 hours. To us, it is intolerable and makes us very upset. But this is part of life in India. In the minds of Indians, time is part of the universe. Since the universe is infinite as far as time or space is concerned, no one minds a delay of a few hours.

Once you have stepped into a hard-sleeper carriage, your first impression would probably be that it is like a cage house. The narrow and dirty carriage is crowded with passengers sitting or sleeping wherever possible. People of different faiths, or different ethnic groups are all packed in the same carriage. After a dozen or more hours travelling together, their differences are replaced with harmony.

The carriage usually reeks with unbearable smells and teems with flies and mosquitoes. The floor is thick with dirt and grease. Local passengers seem nonchalant or perhaps have got used to such an environment. They spread out food on the berth to eat and, when they have finished eating, sweep all rubbish and leftovers on to the floor with their hands. They do not hesitate to sleep or sit on the berth again. What is more important to them is purity of their souls, not physical cleanliness. The Ganges River is full of germs, yet Indians believe that it is not only able to wash away one's dirt but also one's sins.

Indian railways have been criticized for worn-out equipment, frequent delays and accidents. However, the railway is the lifeline of India. The railway company alone supports 1.8 million families. It is the largest employer in India. Life in an Indian train is the epitome of the daily life of Indian people.

Shan, H.K.

Contributions Solicited

We are grateful for the warm support of our readers who have sent us their contributions. Please remember that you are always welcome to write to us aritles on any topic related to travelling so that you can share your experiences with other readers. The story for this column should be within 500 words. A full-length story of more than 1,500 words with good photos may be published in other columns such as "Traveller's Corner" or "Travel Journal".

Please mail your story to: English Editorial Department, Hong Kong China Tourism Press, 24/F Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or send it via Email: edit-e@hkctp.com.hk.

BELOVED SOUVENIRS

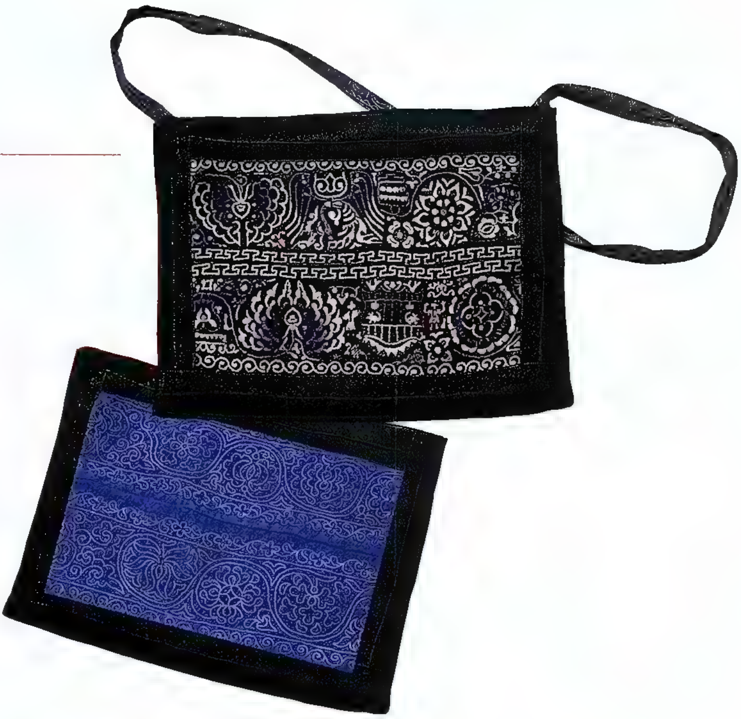
Ethnic Embroidered Cloth Bags in Yunnan

I am fond of travelling and, along the way, like to buy local arts and crafts, particularly things made of textiles such as Indian saris, Indonesian batik, Yunnan's Zharam, Guizhou's embroidery, to name only a few. But they are bought mostly for decorative purposes, not for practical use.

A few years back, in a small village of the Bai nationality in Xizhou of Yunnan, I happened to see this cloth bag. The shop owner said that an old lady in her eighties had embroidered it. The bag was made of two pieces of cloth. The two sides of the bag were embroidered with different patterns in style and craftsmanship. They were superbly and uniquely executed. It went along with the fashion of that year. It has become one of the favorites among my collection.

Price: 80 yuan
Place: Villages of the Bai (White) people in Xizhou, Yunnan

Dianna, H.K.



NECESSITIES EN ROUTE

MP3 Music Player

Music is one of the most important enjoyments in life. Particularly when you travel alone in a remote place, you feel exhilarated on hearing a familiar melody. In the past, one brought along your walkman, which was, unfortunately, not very convenient. When you were back home, you would find that your favorite tape was no longer itself. That pained one's heart. Then there came the discman. Though wear and tear was no longer a problem, it often skipped music bars. If you happened to be on a long-distance bus driving on a bumpy road, the music you were listening would be fragmented. How could you call it an enjoyment?

Now what we bring for travel is the MP3 music player. This is most popular these days with no wear and tear and no skipping. It is large in capacity (e.g. ram capacity 64MB, memory 128MB, recording 50 songs). My MP3 is capable of recording vocal sound as well. It is very convenient indeed.

Model: JNC-DMG **Price:** Around HK$1,300
Shop: Yau Shing Commercial Centre, Mong Kok, Hong Kong

Small Tangarine, H.K.

RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION

Nepal's Fruit Garden Hotel

Any one who is used to life in a big city worries about sanitationat accommodation facilities if going to climb mountains in Nepal. I went there early this year and found that things are improving.

My climbing route was from Naya Pul, via Poon Hill to Beni. It was seven o'clock in the evening when we got to Tatopani. I desperately needed a good rest. The guide led us to a hotel named Fruit Garden. As indicated by its name, the hotel grew many fruit trees and guests were welcome to pick fruit free of charge. Apart from a hot spa bath, one could have all kinds of cuisine such as Mexican, Chinese, Italian, vegetarian.... At night, one could watch the constellations in the garden. Located in a busy street, it is all within walking distance to go shopping or to buy some souvenirs or travelling necessities.

Hot bath: Rupee10
Spring bath: Rupee 50
Accommodation: US$10 per night

Keith, H.K.

Readership Survey

China Tourism always appreciates feedback from its readers. In accordance with your suggestions, we have recently added a variety of new columns. Still, we need to know more of your opinions, including criticisms and suggestions. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us. Thank you!

Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism*.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Cultural Journey from Mt Jiuhua to Huizhou	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Back to Hailling Island	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We Love Rock 'n Roll	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pangquangou in Summer & Autumn	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bicycling Through Tibet Alone	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others: ______________________	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cover	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Articles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Art Design	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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*Please mail this questionnaire to our office at 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or fax to (852) 2561 8196.

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Hefei	Anhui Hotel Hefei	****	Meishan Rd, Hefei	(551) 2811818	(551) 2817583
	Anhui Angang Hotel	***	273 Wuhu Rd, Hefei	(551) 2626888	(551) 2630909
	Overseas Chinese Hotel	***	98 Changjiang Rd, Hefei	(551) 2652221	(551) 2642861
	Meiling Mansion Hefei	***	126 Chaohu Rd, Hefei	(551) 2647277	(551) 2613457
	Qiyunshan Villa Hotel	**	25 Wuhu Rd, Hefei	(551) 2647777	(551) 2644584
	Xinya Hotel	**	18 Shengli Rd, Hefel	(551) 2621112	(551) 2626067
Huangshan	Cloud Valley Hotel	***	Yungusi Scenic Area, Huangshan	(559) 5562477	(559) 5562346
	North Sea Guest House	***	North Sea, Huangshan	(559) 5562704	(559) 5562708
	Huangshan Taiping Int'l Hotel	***	17 Pinghu Rd, Huangshan	(559) 8532888	(559) 8532588
	Beihai Hotel	***	Beihai Scenic Spot, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5562704	(559) 5562708
	Tao Yuan Hotel	***	Huangshan Hot Spring Area, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5562388	(559) 5562888
	Huangshan Wenquan Hotel	***	Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5562511	(559) 5562788
	Taiping International Hotel	***	17 Pinghu Rd, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 8532888	(559) 8532588
	Xi Hai Hotel	***	Xihai Scenic Spot, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5562987	(559) 5562988
	Huangshan Hotel	**	Huangshan Hot Spring, Huangshan	(559) 5562122	(559) 5562121
	Huangshan Suodao Hotel	**	12 Xianredong, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5518141	(559) 8532082
	Huangshan Power Hotel	**	1 Qianyuan Rd S., Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 2513449	
	Huaxi Hotel	**	1 Xizhen St., Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 2514312	(559) 2514990
	Jiangxinzhou Hotel Huangshan	**	4 Jiangxinzhou, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 2512612	
	Xin'anjiang Hotel Tunxi	**	65 Binjiang Rd C, Tunxi Dist., Huangshan	(559) 5613661	
Tongling	Dongya Hotel Jiuhua Mountain		Mount Jiuhua, Tongling	(566) 5011370	(566) 5011372
	Julong Hotel		Mount Jiuhua, Tongling	(566) 5011368	(566) 5011022
	Tianjinghu Hotel Tongling	**	187 Changjiang Rd W, Tongling	(562) 2833700	
	Jindu Hotel Tongling	**	Yi'an Rd, Tongling	(562) 2831989	
	Wusongshan Hotel Tongling	**	55 Yi'an Rd N, Tongling	(562) 2864487	
	Lingjiang Hotel Tongling	**	42 East Changjiang Rd, Tongling	(562) 2835897	

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Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Beijing — Hefei	1 2 3 4 5 6	1035	1230	MU5105
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1830	2025	MU5163
Hefei — Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6	0800	0955	MU5105
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1550	1745	MU5163
Chengdu — Hefei	3 7	1610	1905	SZ4521
	5	1735	2030	SZ4521
	3 7	1430	1625	MU5423
Hefei — Chengdu	3 7	1945	2300	SZ4521
	5	2110	0015	SZ4521
	3 7	0805	1005	MU5423
Dalian — Hefei	1 4 6 7	1345	1510	CZ3653
	1 4	0815	0950	CJ6373
Hefei — Dalian	1 4 6 7	1135	1255	CZ3653
	1 4	1550	1720	CJ6373
Guangzhou — Hefei	1 2 3 4 5 6	1650	1830	CZ3817
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1730	1920	MU5341
Hefei — Guangzhou	1 2 3 4 5 6	1840	2150	CZ3800
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1420	1615	MU5341
Haikou — Hefei	1 4 7	1505	1825	CZ3837
	3 7	2355	0240	MU5397
	5	1240	1630	HU7325
Hefei — Haikou	1 4 7	1910	2225	CZ3837
	3 7	2120	2310	MU5397
	5	1720	2110	HU7325
Hong Kong — Hefei	1 3 5	1120	1315	MU5013
Hefei — Hong Kong	1 3 5	0830	1020	MU5013
Qingdao — Hefei	2 6	2240	2345	MU5523
	1 5	0745	0950	SC 741
Hefei — Qingdao	2 6	2100	2200	MU5523
	1 5	1525	1635	SC 741
Shanghai (Hongqiao) — Hefei	1 2 3 4 5 6	1410	1515	MU5571
	1 2 3 4 5 6	2100	2210	MU5574
Hefei — Shanghai (Hongqiao)	1 2 3 4 5 6	0750	0855	MU5572
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1605	1710	MU5574

Flights to and from **Huangshan**

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Beijing — Huangshan	1 2 3 4 5 6	2130	2340	MU5168
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1705	1910	XW 179
Huangshan — Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6	2130	2340	MU5168
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1955	2205	XW 179
Fuzhou — Huangshan	1 4 6	1845	1940	WU 529
Huangshan — Fuzhou	1 4 6	1655	1805	WU 529
Guangzhou — Huangshan	1 2 5	0745	0920	CZ3519
	2 4 6 7	1225	1405	3Q4583
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1020	1150	MU7526
Huangshan — Guangzhou	1 2 5	0950	1125	CZ3519
	1 2 3 4 5 6	2000	2150	CZ3800
	2 4 6 7	1445	1615	3Q4583
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1220	1350	MU7526
Guilin — Huangshan	3 6	1700	1820	3Q4585
Huangshan — Guilin	3 6	1900	2040	3Q4585
Hefei — Huangshan	1 2 3 4 5 6	1840	1920	CZ3800
	2 6	0810	0840	MU5325
	1 4	1335	1410	MU5521
Huangshan — Hefei	1 4	2015	2050	MU5521
	2 6	1955	2025	MU5522
Hong Kong — Huangshan	2 6	1720	1915	MU5015
Huangshan — Hong Kong	2 6	1430	1615	MU5015
Kunming — Huangshan	3	1500	1820	3Q4585
	6	1455	1820	3Q4585
Huangshan — Kunming	3 6	1900	2230	3Q4585
Shanghai (Pudong) — Huangshan	1 2 3 4 5 6	0725	0820	MU5511
	1 2 3 4 5 6	2230	2330	MU5583
	4 6	1505	1600	XO9549
	1	1455	1600	XO9549
Huangshan — Shanghai (Pudong)	1 2 3 4 5 6	2200	2250	MU5511
	1 2 3 4 5 6	0600	0700	MU5583
	1 4 6	2110	2210	XO9549
Shantou — Huangshan	4 7	1900	2020	CZ8857
Huangshan — Shantou	4 7	2055	2210	CZ8857
Shenzhen — Huangshan	2 6	1150	1325	MU5326
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1835	2000	ZH 951
Huangshan — Shenzhen	2 6	0920	1105	MU5325
	1 2 3 4 5 6	2040	2255	ZH 951
Wuhan — Huangshan	1 4 6	1530	1610	WU 529
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1355	1510	WU 533
	3 7	1625	1720	2Z 501
Huangshan — Wuhan	1 4 6	2020	2050	WU 529
	1 2 3 4 5 6	1550	1710	WU 533
	3 7	1750	1850	2Z 501
Xiamen — Huangshan	2 5 7	1915	2030	MF8529
Huangshan — Xiamen	2 5 7	2110	2220	MF8529
Xi'an — Huangshan	3 7	0810	1720	2Z 501
Huangshan — Xi'an	3 7	1750	2050	2Z 501

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Airline codes:

CZ = China Southern Airlines
SC = Shandong Airlines
XW = China Xinhua Airlines
HU = Hainan Airlines Co Ltd
SZ = China Southwest Airlines
2Z = Chang'an Airlines
MF = Xiamen airlines Co Ltd
WU = Wuhan Airlines
3Q = Yunnan Airlines
MU = China Eastern Airlines
XO = Xinjiang Airlines

Highlights of Issue No. 268

- In this issue's Feature Story, our correspondents have designed four intriguing and totally different travel routes in **Guangdong Province** for you:

  In northern Guangdong, you may hike the Danxia Mountains, known as the "No. 1 Magic Mountain in Lingnan" (an area covering Guangdong and Guangxi), while Qingyuan and Shaoguan offer you spectacular karst landscapes and refreshing scenery;

  Just across the narrow straits from Hainan Island, Zhanjiang is a touristy seaside resort in western Guangdong. As well as glorying in the endless beaches, travellers can explore the ruins of a volcanic island and the unsophisticated Tianchengtai Tourist Village;

  Heyuan, a tranquil place still undiscovered by the majority of travellers, boasts a different view of eastern Guangdong. Heyuan's unique scenic attractions include the Sujiawei Hakka Village, Heyuan Dinosaurs Museum, Wanlu Lake Scenic Area and Longchuan Ancient City;

  On top of these, travellers must not miss a dip in the hot springs when touring Guangdong.

- The **Tibetan antelope** is a unique and mysterious animal living on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which at 7,000-plus metres above sea level is known as the world's "roof" or "third pole". After undertaking many perilous expeditions in pursuit of his passion for the Tibetan antelope, the writer of "Nature" reveals vital facts about this creature. You are welcome to share his exciting discoveries: why tens of thousands of female antelopes migrate northward every summer to bear their young in the hostile no-mans land of Kekexili; and how the baby antelopes are raised in such an unforgiving environment.

- If one seeks picturesque views on a journey, the **Sichuan Province in golden autumn** is a must. In "Photography", our correspondent tours such famous Sichuan sites as the Yading Nature Reserve, Hailuogou Scenic Area and Four Maidens Mountain, and is rewarded with irresistible and heavenly scenery. Along with his photographic works are detailed itineraries, useful information on transport and accommodation, and personal travel tips.

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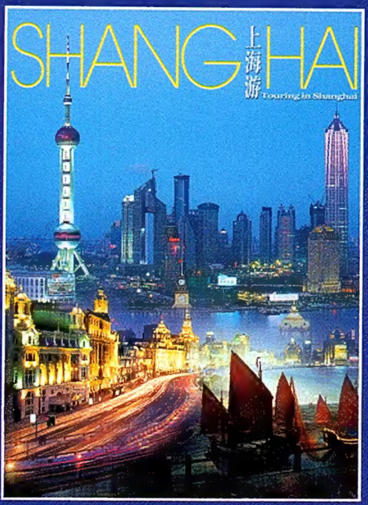

Shanghai has evolved at an unprecedented speed for decades into the biggest commercial city in China and one of the great metropolises of the world. Favourably located at the mouth of the Yangtse River, Shanghai has a long history and a rich culture. Commercial tower blocks and traditional buildings exude their individual charms simultaneously in the Pudong District, where hundreds of buildings in different styles, old or new, are collectively known as the Exposition of World Architecture. A kaleidoscope of entertainments and festivals of Old Shanghai attracts scores of entrepreneurs and travellers alike. "Touring in Shanghai" takes you deeper into this vibrant city through spectacular photography, along with outlines for more than 10 different kinds of tours including a shopping tour, popular tourist sights, cultural excursions, and more. Practical information summarises accommodations, transport and dining options, and tourist maps are also included. "Touring in Shanghai" is the latest, most comprehensive travel pictorial of Shanghai available in Hong Kong.

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